EARL STRONGBOW.

VOL. II.

BRITISH MUSEUM

EARL STRONGBOW:

OR,

THE HISTORY

OF

RICHARD DE CLARE

AND

THE BEAUTIFUL GERALDA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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EARL STRONGBOW.

NIGHT XI.

MIDNIGHT came, and, ſoon after it, Earl Strongbow. I will not, continued he, recount all the particulars of this tournament. The knights of Wales ſupported, as uſual, the high reputation of their valour, and thoſe of England did due honour to her chivalry. All the Cambro-Britiſh princes and princeſſes were preſent, and, together with their ladies and their nobles, who vied with one another in ſumptuous array, aug-

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mented the majeſty and ſplendor of the ſcene.

Grijalva won much glory by unhorſing a gigantic warrior of the Hebrides, whoſe bravery and proweſs had laid waſte the field. I alſo had a hideous conflict with another Hebridian. Scorning the lance, we fought with battle-axes. Dire were the blows we dealt. The field and the neighbouring battlements reſounded. Our targets were hewn in pieces; our morions, habergeons, and cuiſhes battered. Blood ſtreamed through the joints and crevices of our armour. So thick, ſo furious were the ſtrokes, that by mutual conſent we reſted to take breath. The combat was ſoon renewed with redoubled fierceneſs.

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At length, upraiſing my ponderous axe, I poiſed it aloft: it fell like a thunderbolt on the head of my appalled adverſary. His eyes ſwam in darkneſs; he bowed his head to the ſaddle;. his feet forſook the ſtirrups. Buther, who foamed with rage, would have bounded againſt the courſer of the helpleſs Hebridian; but I reined him in, and admiring the force and valour of the knight, permitted him to recover unmoleſted. And now the Prince of Powis, great Lewellyn, riſing from his throne, bade his heralds ſound the ſignal of ſeparation.

Amongſt the Engliſh knights who had repaired to this aſſembly, came Humphrey de la Mark and Richard Fitzwalter; the latter of whom had

been carried away ſenſeleſs, but a little before my return. This diſaſter, we learnt, originated in the reſtleſs policy of Richard. A Scottiſh knight, who had long kept the field, and whoſe ſtrength was nearly exhauſted by reiterated acts of valour, appeared to the ſhrewd Fitzwalter, (who as yet had not mixed in action) to preſent to him an opportunity of gleaning ſome renown. It chanced, however, that a Cambrian chief had conceived the like deſire. Fitzwalter remarked it, and, reſolving by addreſs to rid himſelf of a rival, informed the chief that his ſteed had lodged a nail in the hollow of his hoof, which he had noted, as the animal pawed with his fore-foot, and adviſed the rider to diſmount

diſmount and remedy the grievance. The unſuſpecting knight of Wales gave credit to what he ſaid, and alighted without delay. Mean while Fitzwalter clapped ſpurs to his own courſer, and haſtened to aſſault the warrior of Caledonia. The Cambrian, who quickly perceived the jeſt, remounted with celerity, and puſhing with full ſpeed towards Fitzwalter, and wheeling in his front, upreared a maſſive mace, which falling unreſiſted on the helmet of Richard, ſtruck him inſtantly to the earth, devoid of ſpeech and motion.

De la Mark, who beheld the defeat of Fitzwalter, was ſo affected and diſmayed by his awful condition, that he openly vowed to the Virgin and

Saint Winifred, never more to aim at being politic and deſigning, but thenceforth and utterly to abjure craft, and revert to his original and native plainneſs. If the hereditary cunning, ſaid he, of my ſpeechleſs and unhappy friend, hath ſucceeded ſo ill, upon repeated experiments, what, alas! muſt be the fate of mine, ſeeing that I am by nature rather ſimple, and am undiſciplined in the arts of veteran diſſimulation? Soon after, he returned to his caſtle and his kindred, and ſpent the reſidue of his life like a worthy and well-meaning baron.

The tournament was followed by a magnificent feaſt. Ten royal chiefs, with their conſorts, and the beautiful princeſſes their daughters, ſate in ſtate

ſtate at the upper end of a vaſt and lofty hall, on every ſide of which hung well-ranged lances, falchions, helmets, targets, banners, the ſpoils and trophies of ſucceſsful war, inherited in proud ſucceſſion from the æra of Caractacus. The reſt of the noble warriors were feaſted at the long tables which reached from end to end of this immenſe and ſtately pile. And now, the maſſy diſhes being removed, the goblets glowed upon the board, and bards and minſtrels were preparing their loud harps for lofty ſong, when ſuddenly a trumpet ſounds, the doors fly open, and a herald in Hibernian attire, bearing a royal banner, enters, and proclaims the approach of the king of Leinſter. The illuſtrious, but

unfortunate Mac Murragh, cried he, implores the aid of great Lewellyn, and of the high-born princes and redoubted knights who compoſe this grand aſſembly. This ſaid, the herald, bowing reverently, retired. His royal lord now preſents himſelf in the hall; the nobles riſe, the prince of Powis, ſtepping forward, meets the monarch midway, and conducting him courteouſly to the upper end of the hall, ſeats him beneath a canopy on the right hand of his throne. The invigorating bowl went round; the bards ſublimely touched the Cambrian lyre, and ſung the Chriſtian victories in Paleſtine; how the infidels were diſcomfited by Duke Godfrey of Boulogne, and how Baldwin Earl of Flan-

ders

ders was crowned ſovereign of the Holy City.

At length, they ceaſed the ſtrain; and the monarch of Leinſter, riſing from his ſeat, with a dignified deportment thus addreſſed the aſſembly:—Ye potentates, and lords, and valorous knights, behold in me an exiled king, who entreats the ſuccour of your counſel and your arms, to replace upon his head the loſt diadem of his forefathers. To deſerve, to obtain your aid, it is ſufficient to plead affliction. Were more neceſſary, I might remind the royal perſonages, before whom I ſpeak, of the unſtableneſs of fortune, and the miſeries which are incident to the condition of humanity. The throne cannot raiſe us above the

reach

reach of viciſſitude; the ſcepter cannot ward off the aſſaults of calamity. Born in purple, bred to royalty, ye heavens! did I ever deem that I ſhould one day be an errant ſuppliant, a mendicant for ſuccours in a foreign kingdom? But no more:—the juſtly-renowned valour and benignity of this iſland, bid me abandon grief, and hope for reſtoration. I have ſtill ſome faithful adherents in Hibernia: *all* Leinſter hath not bowed beneath the yoke of an invader. Victory will not always frown upon my hoſts: there is yet a day of triumph for the banners of Mac Murragh: his falchion ſhall drink the blood of his aſtoniſhed enemies. Princes, noble knights, give ear. Though glory be the only object

ject to a knightly mind, ſomewhat more than glory ſhall reward you. Leinſter abounds in fair and fertile plains, in well-built cities, in extenſive ſhores, in numerous harbours. The brave ſhall have his portion. The chief, moreover, who ſhall head this enterprize, and recover by his arms my realm from the uſurper, his be the daughter of my boſom, beauteous Eva, his too my throne, when I ſhall ſleep with my progenitors. And let not, illuſtrious and valiant peers, the difficulties attendant on invading a warlike land diſincline you to this great and ſplendid expedition. Recollect, ye that owe allegiance to king Henry, that England, brave, and opulent, and united beneath the ſway of

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one magnanimous and martial ſove-reign, ſubmitted to the ſwords of your heroic anceſtors; and that Wil-liam, victorious by a ſingle battle, annexed the crown of the Anglo-Saxons to the coronet of Normandy.

He ſaid. A murmur of approba-tion was heard through the aſſembly. The great Lewellyn promiſed him ſupplies of troops and money. Se-veral of the other princes imitated his example. Many knights of Wales offered each his ſingle ſervice: nor did we of England ſhew leſs alacrity. The royal exile teſtified his acknow-ledgment, in courteous terms, and was preparing to addreſs, a ſecond time, his warlike auditors, when a new and unlooked-for ſpectacle ex-

cited

cited our attention. A reverend uſher, with a white beard and a ſtaff of ebony, now entered the hall, preceding a melancholy dame clad in ſable apparel, who advanced to the footſtool of the prince of Powis, and, on bended knee, delivered theſe expreſſions:—Defender of the oppreſſed, comforter of the afflicted, ſupporter of the needy, chaſtiſer of the arrogant, great Lewellyn, hear my ſupplication, and redreſs my grievances. Then, turning herſelf to me, ſhe cried, And you, redoubted Strongbow, the renown of whoſe achievements hath already extended throughout the neighbouring kingdoms, let thy refulgent and terrific Gridalbin be unſheathed for the relief of the miſerable.

Know,

Know, courteous and mighty Lords, that in the country of Gwyned, which, in the Saxon tongue, is termed North-Wales, there is, near the monaſtery of Valle Crucis, high-reared upon a conical and pointed hill, a caſtle, by the Cambrians called Dinas Bran. In this caſtle dwells a fierce, and covetous, and cruel chieftain, (knight he is not) who now holds in thraldom a fair and virtuous lady, whom, together with myſelf, her kinſwoman, and this our truſty uſher, the caitiffs of his train aſſaulted as we rode upon the margin of the ſilver Dee, and wickedly conveyed to that ſtupendous fortreſs, of which I have juſt ſpoken; there to remain until ſuch time as ranſom ſhall be paid for our deliverance.

Now,

Now, noble and tremendous lords, the damſel and myſelf, though well deſcended, are but poor: neither will our kindred contribute to our enlargement; for they alſo are avaricious, and conſume our little ſtore, while we, alas! are mourning in captivity. Sundry knights of honourable name, and puiſſant valour, now groan beneath the rigour of this tyrant of the hills, and pine within the dungeons of his caſtle. Peradventure, brave and high-minded nobles, you admire how I, thus ſuppliant before you, have eſcaped the vigilant oppreſſor. Know then, that I dreamed, not many nights ago, that within a certain portion of the fortreſs, there was a cavity, reaching

through the very bowels of the hill, in a perpendicular direction, down to the level of the adjacent plains, where, after running obliquely for ſome yards, it loſt itſelf amidſt the brakes and thickets there adjoining. Having therefore watched a favourable occaſion, I, in the dead hour of midnight, with Urien, my right-faithful uſher, deſcended by the kindneſs of two ſtrong cables, at the lower end of which was affixed a wooden ſeat: this Urien occupied, I being in his lap, and holding a dark lantern. At length, noble Heroes, after a diſmal deſcent, we felt the bottom, and, creeping along the paſſage, iſſued, at dawn of day, through the brambles which encompaſs the orifice. (Here

unveiling

unveiling her countenance, and diſcloſing her arms, ſhe ſhewed the perilous ſcratches and foul disfigurement which ſhe intrepidly had undergone). Hearing, upon our way, of the gorgeous tournament of high Lewellyn, we provided us with palfreys, and ſpeeded forthwith to implore aid from the invincible. This ſaid, ſhe veiled her injured viſage, and, conducted by her venerable uſher, withdrew in the ſame triſtful ſhew in which ſhe had made her entry.

Ardent for enterprize, and as the dame had ſo particularly addreſſed herſelf to me, I deemed it befitting to ſtep foremoſt in her cauſe. Riſing therefore, and demanding permiſſion from the monarch of Leinſter, (to

whom I had already engaged my ſword) and who graciouſly and generouſly granted it, I drew Gridalbin from the ſcabbard, and, devoutly preſſing the handle of it to my lips *, ſwore by the hallowed reliques of St. Urſula, that I would neither ſleep in a bed, nor eat from off a table-cloth, nor comb my beard, nor put aſide my armour, till I had righted thoſe aggrieved ladies, and chaſtiſed the outrageous caitiff that dwelt in Dinas Bran. Don Juan roſe, and made the like ſacrament; ſo alſo did the Mac Murragh, and, with him, Howel ap Rice, a valorous warrior,

* For this purpoſe the hilts of ſwords, in the days of Chivalry, were made in the form of a croſs.

deputed

deputed by Lewellyn as his champion. We part from the aſſembly: we mount our courſers: conducted by the dame and uſher, we purſue the neareſt track towards the mountains of Llangollen. All night we journeyed. Soon as Aurora bluſhed upon the firmament, we found ourſelves in the foreſts of Chirk, and, ſpeeding from thence over the heathy tops of Ceſn Uchan, arrived within ſight of the high-towering fortreſs that, perched upon the ſummit of a ſteep and loſty hill, looked arrogantly down upon the meads and the winding Dee, and ſeemed to threaten the defenceleſs with calamity.

Leaving our courſers in a wood, we advanced up the hill to the outer

gate, through the door of which we ſoon hewed a paſſage with a pole-axe belonging to the knight of Powis. The retainers of the miſcreant, alarmed by the noiſe, now hurried to the barbican, but not time enough to prevent my entry: for, having forced my way through the breach in the door, I was proceeding to lift the bars for the admiſſion of my companions. I wheeled round however, and with Gridalbin made a hideous carnage of this varletry. I then let in the Mac Murragh and the two knights, who, in concert with me, attacked the great door which immediately led into the caſtle. But finding this too ſtrong, and being galled with arrows from the ſpike-holes and the battle-

ments,

ments, we altered our plan of aſſault. Howel ap Rice put his target over his head; upon this Grijalva mounted, and, placing his target in the ſame poſition, upbore the king of Leinſter, on whoſe broad buckler I ſtood ſublime, and, with the battle-axe, beat in the iron bars of a narrow window, through which we entered by the aid of one another. Some of thoſe within made a ſhew of reſiſtance, but ſoon fled at the gleaming of Gridalbin.

Our firſt object was to ſeek the caitiff chieftain, and ſecure his perſon. After a tedious ſearch, we found him underneath an inverted baſket, which lay in a darkſome corner of the great kitchen, and having, by means of a

leathern thong, united his heels with his head, we left him in the ſame baſket, there to remain till our departure from the fortreſs. Our next care was to releaſe the impriſoned lady, and the knights of whom the dame had ſpoken. The former we reſtored to her kinſwoman: amongſt the latter I recognized three valiant knights whom I had known at the caſtle of the Earl of Shrewſbury. They were Maurice Fitzgerald, Robert Fitzſtephens, and Maurice de Pendergaſt, noble and puiſſant perſonages, who, journeying this way, and unacquainted with the character of the lord of the fortreſs, had entered it, and fallen victims to his inſidious hoſpitality. For lo!

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in the dead of night, they were ſeized, while under the dominion of ſleep, by his ruffianly retainers, loaded with chains, and conveyed to a deep dungeon, where they muſt have lain amidſt the horrors of darkneſs and of want, till either ranſomed at an enormous ſum, or releaſed by force of arms. They expreſſed, in courtly phraſe, their grateful ſenſe of the benefit conferred on them, and being informed by us of the propoſed deſcent on Ireland, moſt joyfully conſented to engage in the expedition.

We then gave freedom to numberleſs other captives of inferior quality, and, ere we quitted the caſtle, diſpoſed of the caitiff whom we had confined to the baſket. As juſtice,

and the tranquillity of the country, demanded that an awful example ſhould be made of this miſcreant, we directed him to be hung out from the battlements of his own fortreſs, as a terror to the flagitious, as a pledge of ſafety to the peaceable. This done, we returned to the royal reſidence of Lewellyn, accompanied by the three knights whoſe liberation we had accompliſhed.

But behold, it is now the time when ſprites repair to their abodes. Adieu! courteous ſtranger.

NIGHT

NIGHT XII.

I AM now, ſaid Earl Strongbow at our next meeting, about to enter upon the moſt ſplendid and important portion of my ſtory. A grand council was aſſembled in the preſence of the prince of Powis, and the monarch of Leinſter, in which was to be determined what peer ſhould head the enterprize. Never did my ſoul experience more anxiety. Renown was my only object. The proffer of a royal bride, and a reverſionary throne, you will believe could not allure the faithful lover of Geralda. The firſt I could not accept;

accept; the ſecond, without the firſt, was unattainable. No: to live to lateſt times by an ever-during fame, to ſoar aloft upon the pinions of victory, and add new kingdoms to the empire of King Henry, this was the ambition which burned within my breaſt, this was the prize and recompence I ſought for.

Fortunately, my Claribert, ever careful of my grandeur, had ſecretly ſuggeſted to Don Juan de Grijalva, the meaſure of riſing ſuddenly at an early ſtage of the debate, and propoſing Earl Strongbow as the leader in the expedition. Grijalva, true to the friendſhip which ſubſiſted between us, having ſaid a few words as an apology for a foreigner's interfering

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in a matter of ſuch high moment, declared it to be his ſentiment, as a knight, and as a member of that warlike aſſembly, that the man whoſe name was already ſo high in arms, that even aliens to the Engliſh government, the inhabitants of the Cambrian deſarts, had beſought the ſuccour of his all-conquering ſword, was the hero on whom the eyes of all ſhould now be turned, and to whoſe fortune and proweſs ſuch an enterprize ſhould be committed: that he, for one, would follow with alacrity the banner of Earl Strongbow; deeming that the richeſt harveſt of fame was to be reaped near the footſteps of that illuſtrious and intrepid commander.

Meanwhile the inferior ſoldiery, and ſuch warriors as were tempted by the hope of ſettlements in the fertile provinces of Ireland, but had not been ſummoned to the council, thronged tumultuouſly to the doors, clung to the windows of the great hall in which we ſate, and ſeconded with their ſhouts the propoſition of Grijalva. The name of Strongbow reſounded through the caſtle. This alſo had been owing to the diligence of Claribert, who, during my excurſion to Dinas Bran, had aſſiduouſly inflamed the minds of the ſoldiers with heroic ſongs in praiſe of my achievements. Theſe were eagerly liſtened to by the multitude; copies were written down and diſperſed, and ſuch knights and nobles

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as could not read, procured fit perſons to recite them in their hearing. The ſucceſs proved anſwerable to the expectations of the minſtrel, notwithſtanding the artful endeavours of Fitzwalter, who, now reſtored to the enjoyment of his ſenſes, had, with his uſual agility of mind, been employed in inſinuating amongſt the warriors that I was in no wiſe a proper perſon to be the leader of ſuch an enterprize: that, however fortunate I had been in ſome recent exploits, my natural bias led me to tranquillity: that philoſophy and love chiefly occupied my ſoul: and, in fine, that the direction of ſo important an invaſion might be better entruſted to thoſe who, in a manner, were generals and ſtateſmen

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by birth; who had imbibed the principles of war and politics from their fathers, men who had either ſerved the ſtate in its military expeditions, or been repeatedly conſulted in the ſecret councils of the ſovereign.

But the ſuggeſtions of art and envy were overborne and ſtifled by the torrent of public favour; the king of Leinſter gave his cordial concurrence to the motion; Prince Lewellyn was not againſt it; many knights and barons came over to my party, while the reſt, intimidated by the clamour without doors, reluctantly acceded to what they could not prevent. I was forthwith declared ſupreme commander. The great object being thus ſecured, my cares were next employ-

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ed in preparing the neceſſary forces and ſupplies. Many knights had, from perſonal attachment to me, engaged their ſwords to the monarch of Leinſter: many alſo with a view of obtaining rich poſſeſſions.

It was now the unanimous opinion of my friends, that I ſhould return, without delay, to my caſtle of Chepſtow, arm all my vaſſals and retainers, and communicate the project to ſuch gallant knights as were eager to acquire fame in military operations. Wherefore, having firſt diſpatched a meſſenger to the Earl of Northumberland, from whoſe friendſhip I looked for conſiderable aid, I ſet forward for Monmouthſhire, (where my power

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and intereſt principally lay) accompanied by the king of Leinſter, Claribert, Grijalva, Sir Anſelm, Fitzgerald, Fitzſtephens, and De Pendergaſt. I did not forget the good lord Abbot in my way, who gloried in the idea of our intended deſcent on Ireland, and, ſoon after, ſent me ten valiant knights, equipped at the charges of the monaſtery.

When arrived at the reſidence of my anceſtors, this caſtle, on the mouldering walls of which I rehearſe to you, ſtranger, the adventures of my human ſtate, I ſummoned my men at arms, the vaſſals of my houſe, and enjoined them to make ready, without loſs of time, to attend me in refulgent arms

upon

upon the neighbouring ſhore of the Severn Sea. I then gave order for a ſumptuous feaſt, to which came many noble knights from the ſhires of Pembroke, Devon, Hereford, and Glouceſter; it being my intent to ſolicit the aſſiſtance of their valour, and, likewiſe, of their counſel. As ſoon, therefore, as the viands were removed, and the maſſive goblets crowned with ſparkling wine, I laid open the plan of the projected invaſion, for the re-eſtabliſhment of my royal gueſt in the dominions of his forefathers. To make a further impreſſion on this illuſtrious audience, I gave a ſignal to Claribert, who ſate beſide me, to touch the animating lyre. The majeſtic

minſtrel bowed aſſent, and ſung as follows:

My harp, awake the fervid ſtrain:
  Undaunted Pembroke calls to me
With ſong to rouſe the martial train
  To deathleſs deeds of chivalry.

True knights inaction nobly ſcorn:
  The hero ſeeks in fields of fame
With high achievements to adorn
  Alike his nation and his name.

Up, lion Richard; Leinſter prays
  Thine aid his ſcepter to reſtore;
Thy ſtars are kind; ere many days
  Thy feet ſhall preſs the fated ſhore.

Pale Rumour ſhall the deed declare,
  And Flight and Horror mark thy way,
Havock thy lance and battle-axe bear,
  Thy banner Victory diſplay.

True knights inaction nobly ſcorn:
  The hero ſeeks in fields of fame
With high achievements to adorn
  Alike his nation and his name.

I ſing,

I ſing, as with a prophet's voice—
Tho' myriads thy approach may weep,
Ere long Ierne ſhall rejoice
That ever Strongbow croſs'd the deep.

O chief, thy all-ſubduing ſword
Shall ſmite her petty monarchs down,
And great Plantagenet *, her lord,
Shall give her laws, and wear her crown.

Oppreſſion, diſcord, rapine, ceaſe:
Erin, fair England ſhall to thee
Impart the principles of peace,
And teach to love true liberty.

Where art thou, Buther, mighty ſteed?
On Vaga's † brink the duſt he ſpurns,
Impatient, with the lightning's ſpeed,
To bear thee where the battle burns.

Go, matchleſs courſer, 'tis reveal'd
Thou ſafe ſhalt paſs the briny flood,
With fi'ry noſtrils ſnuff the field,
And bathe thy rapid hoofs in blood.

* Henry II.

† The ancient name of the river Wye.

Arm, arm, ye men of England, ſtraight,
Earl Strongbow thunders to the brave;
By Severn's ſide ſwift veſſels wait
To ſpeed ye o'er th' Hibernian wave.

See, ſee, he ſhakes his ſnowy plumes!
Gridalbin glitters in his hand!
Woe to the warrior that preſumes
To face him on the bloody ſtrand.

True knights inaction nobly ſcorn:
The hero ſeeks in fields of fame
With high achievements to adorn
Alike his nation and his name.

He ceaſed: theſe lofty roofs re-echoed with loud applauſe, and Hervey de Mount-Morres, Richard de Poer, Robert Fitzbernard, and Redmond Fitzhugh, declared their firm reſolve to fight beneath my banners. Their example was ſoon followed by William Fitzaldelm, Miles de St. David, Walter de Ridensford, and

Redmond

Redmond Cantimere, who all pronounced themſelves willing and joyful to become my aſſociates in the enterprize.

We were joined by many other knights, ere we ſailed from the Severn. Amongſt thoſe who were preſent at the feaſt of Chepſtow, were John de Courcy, and Hubert de Burgh; names, in the ſucceeding times of Richard *Cœur de lion* and king John, of high renown in Ireland. They were now very young: yet, glowing with warlike ardour, they beſought me to receive them as partakers of the war, and teach them to earn fame by my ſide in the day of battle. Accordingly I knighted them in this chapel underneath us.

The expected ſuccours were at

length aſſembled. From the Earl of Shrewſbury, the friend and guardian of my youth, came thirty knights and one hundred bow-men, under the command of the illuſtrious Sir Nigel de Sackville. From the Lady Geralda came fifteen knights, the vaſſals of her houſe, with forty bow-men well-appointed, at the head of whom was the brave Sir Theodore Fitzhenry. The Earl of Northumberland ſent fifty knights and four hundred bow-men, with one thouſand marks of ſilver towards their maintenance and pay. The gallant Sir Guy Percy, a kinſman of the Earl, was their leader. Theſe, with the knights and archers of Fitzſtephens and Fitzgerald, ten from the Lord Abbot, beſides ſeveral knights who followed me from perſonal re-

gard, or even in queſt of glory, as Grijalva, Sir Anſelm, De Burgh, De Courcy, De Pendergaſt, Mount-Morres, and others, already named, compoſed my auxiliary forces. My own troops amounted to two hundred horſe, and one hundred and ſeventy bow-men, led on by Raymond, my redoubted couſin, and by the wiſe and warlike Ralph de Mowbray. With this little army did we propoſe to ſubdue an ancient and formidable nation.

Being, at length, embarked, we weighed anchor with a fair wind, and bore for the ſouth-eaſt coaſt of Ireland. We were yet within ſight of Lundy Iſland, when a boat appeared in view, making all the ſail ſhe could to overtake us. Great was our ſatiſfaction whe n, on a nearer approach,

we perceived in it that venerable knight, Sir Reginald Fitzalan, who, having heard of our preparations, and mindful of my conqueſt over Ulric the Dane, had reſolved to lend his aid to an enterprize ſo glorious. He had brought with him five knights, and his courageous heir, Sir Andrew, and had arrived at the confluence of the Severn and the Wye, but a little time after our departure.

We were ſoon beyond the yellow waves of the Briſtol channel. Now night had overſhadowed the face of earth and heaven: the ſtars, unveiling their reſplendent beauty, ſmiled through the grand darkneſs: while the ſteady breeze impelled our ſhips acroſs the expanded main. I ſate upon the poop of mine, and muſed

upon

upon my fortunes. I thought of the Lady Geralda. At length, turning to the minſtrel, who ſate beſide me, Claribert, ſaid I, how happy have I been in the concurrent zeal and friendly aid of ſo many illuſtrious and puiſſant warriors! Our hoſt, contracted as it is, yet much exceeds what I had dared to hope for. My ſon, replied the minſtrel, ſuch are the fruits of friendſhip that is ſincere, that is untainted with diſſembled and perfidious envy. There are who love us for our own ſakes; men bleſt by Heaven with a ſingleneſs of heart, a purity of ſoul; men whoſe virtues are vigorous, and whoſe actions correſpond to the cordiality of their feelings. There are alſo, who are jealous of thoſe whoſe

eſteem

eſteem they affect to cultivate; who, conſpiring with others of the like complexion, whiſper over all our failings, and take an inventory of our errors with a malicious accuracy. Theſe invidious beings are inceſſantly employed in drawing, in their troubled minds, compariſons between themſelves and the object of their envy; they approach him by favour of an unmerited intimacy, are conſoled by a diurnal ſcrutiny of his life, and dwell, with ſecret joy, on the imperfections they diſcover. Theſe are the men, my ſon, who in the urgent hour withdraw, or, to ſpeak properly, refuſe their ſuccour, and frequently retard, ſometimes overturn, the moſt ſublime and glorious undertakings.

Often

Often too, by their pretended amity, they obtain an influence, if not the direction, over his projects, and are thus enabled, as it may ſuit their intereſts, to undermine and canker his operations. By theſe means they accompliſh another view: they prevent him from employing the efficacious aſſiſtance of thoſe who are unfeignedly diſpoſed to ſerve him. There are likewiſe, my ſon, who proffer, and indeed perform many acts of friendſhip, merely that they may afterwards make a boaſt of the obligation. Theſe only lay in proviſion for their vanity to feed on. If they are leſs odious than thoſe whom I have already delineated, they are hardly leſs contemptible. My ſon, do not haſtily

adopt

adopt for your friend the man who hath, apparently, a uniform mildneſs of mind. A knave never ſnarls: he can no more afford to be ill-humoured, than a gameſter to be drunk; the ſucceſs of their occupation depending on their compoſure. There are likewiſe ſome, of a leſs atrocious caſt, who, poſſeſſing a native inſipidity of ſoul, inequitably pretend to the merit of good-temper; being ſhielded by their dullneſs from the imputation of the contrary. My ſon, avoid the man who poſſeſſes a wicked ſneer; who ſeeks your ſociety with the ſole aim of acquiring opportunities to ſtab you through the mind. A blow upon the ſoul, my ſon, may prove as painful as one upon the body. Men of this

this deſcription have been likened, not unaptly, to certain liquors, which, having been in bottle, froth pleaſantly againſt the lips, and ſeem to ſmile in our faces, while they are cutting our throats. Theſe men, often decked with an external poliſh, have trained themſelves to the practice of ſly barbarities beneath the garb of facetiouſneſs, and, by a kind of groteſque malignity, contrive to prey upon the comfort of their companions. To theſe give no indulgence; beat them down; cruſh them with an open and unremitted ſeverity. My ſon, deſpiſe the man who ſingularly puts on a ferocity of behaviour; who ſtudies to be uncouth, ſlights the common rules of life, and turns *Oddity*, in order to gratify,

gratify, as by privilege, the diſcourteous tenour of his ſoul. Let us abſtain alſo from intimacy with certain vulgar minds, who, either incapable of knowing our value, or chagrined at our ſuperiority, aſſault us with a vile and uncivilized malevolence, and deem it incumbent on us to reduce our ideas to the mean and wretched ſtandard of their own. In fine, my ſon, one precious rule whereby to judge of native goodneſs of heart, is to pretend to commit ſome action that will bear a two-fold interpretation, one that is honourable, and one that is the contrary. If they who witneſs it, poſſeſs that celeſtial charity of mind, which comprizes all virtue, and, as eccleſiaſtics tell us, is deſcribed

ed by Holy Paul in ſacred writ, they will benignly determine for the honourable conſtruction. Theſe then are the truly good; theſe, my ſon, are friends ineſtimable.

Dawn now appeared, and Earl Strongbow, having concluded the admonitions of Claribert, ſuſpended the narration of his adventures.

NIGHT XIII.

PUNCTUAL to appointment, we met, on the enſuing night, at the well-known bench behind the parapet. The world, reſumed the noble viſion, is like a tablet: what hath been ſet down there, is at length effaced by the finger of time, and new matter introduced, or old matter in new characters. How different were we who invaded Ireland, in language, cuſtoms, manners, ſentiments, knowledge of navigation and the art of war, in our weapons, accoutrements, battering engines, and method of attack, from you of the preſent days! how

how different too the nation which ſubmitted to our yoke, from that which now forms an invaluable portion of the Britiſh empire! Dublin, how changed from what it was when I held the rod of power! I am diverted, nevertheleſs, when I flit, at times, through the caſtle of that city, and behold his grace of Ormond in a flowing wig and ſilken hoſe, ſipping coffee or playing at ombre with his Ducheſs and the Lady Kildare, in the ſelf-ſame ſpot where the Mac Murragh and I, with Fitzgerald and Fitzſtephens, ſate in coats of mail, quaffing from maſſy goblets potent beverage. I laugh to ſee their gaudy battalions in the guard-houſe, and captains with unwarlike air and tinſel

attire, fluttering about thoſe towers, in ſight of which I marſhalled my iron chivalry. I ſmile, and am indeed well-pleaſed, when, peeping in at thoſe midnight dances there given in honour of the natal day of royal Stuart, I ſurvey the improved beauty of the Hibernian dames; ſeeing that, in my time, ladies, even of princely origin, had for their ſole apparel a ſaffron-coloured ſmock, together with (inſtead of comely lace) ſad forehead-cloths, which lent a mean and ſickly air to their ſhortened and half-hidden viſages.

But to return. At the cloſe of the following day we beheld the ſhores of Leinſter ſtretching towards the ſouth, and ſteered directly for the

region

region of Wexford. We diſembarked without oppoſition, none of the natives appearing. Having encamped in a convenient ſpot, refreſhed our ſteeds, and partaken of invigorating viands, we turned our attention to ſtill more important objects. It was propoſed by Sir Reginald Fitzalan for our conſideration, whether we ſhould lay ſiege to the town of Wexford, or march, without delay, to the capital of Leinſter. A council was therefore held, conſiſting of the moſt puiſſant and conſiderable of the knights. We aſſembled in my tent, where Sir Reginald Fitzalan, riſing ſlowly, (his ſnowy head ſhaking with palſied age, a movement not ungraceful in him that is full of days) with a

tremulous tone expreſſed himſelf as follows:—Warlike and knightly nobles, praiſe be to all the Saints, praiſe to the Mother of Chriſt who ſits upon a throne in Heaven, that thus, with a ſwift and proſperous navigation, we have reached the fertile ſhores of green Hibernia. I exult when I ſurvey this gallant ſoldiery, of which it is my boaſt and glory to be one. I am old, noble knights, very old, and have ſeen, and ſerved in many a glorious war, wielded the lance in many a grievous conflict; many hoſts, mighty in numbers, gorgeous in ſhew, and conducted by wiſe and formidable captains, have I beheld, yet never, noble warriors, did I ſee one ſo full of martial ardour, ſo begirt, as I may

ſay,

ſay, with bravery. But alas! we are but a few.—I would not, knights, be underſtood, (ſurely it cannot be imputed to me) to mean to throw a damp upon the alacrity I perceive amongſt us. God forbid. But good conduct is the ſiſter of true courage. In an enemy's country, overgrown with foreſts, and ſwarming with a hardy race, it behoves us to take heed that we be not circumvented, or waſted away, by hovering armies, ſome of which will intercept our proviſions, ſome hang upon our rear, ſome lie in ambuſh in the covert of the woods, or, trepanning us in ſome hollow way, overwhelm us with the irreſiſtible weight of myriads, inceſſantly augmented from every corner

of this iſland. Who knows but that, even now, this appearance of repoſe, this utter abſence of oppoſition, may prove a fraudful covering to ſome meditated hoſtility? Peradventure, noble warriors, it may be urged, that the king of Leinſter and his adherents are a pledge for our ſecurity; that, with their knowledge of the country, and the daily ſuccours which they, doubtleſs, will acquire, we cannot incur danger, either from the fraud, or the force of inimical multitudes. Were the king of Leinſter to remain with us, this argument might be concluſive. But, noble warriors, the intereſts of the Mac Murragh, and of the expedition at large, demand his immediate ſeparation from our hoſt,

and

and call ſtraightway for his preſence and his powers in another quarter. The Mac Murragh, indeed, may wind his way, with a few faithful followers, through the well-known tracks of his hereditary dominions, and, in his progreſs accumulating friends, may at length burſt forth in arms within the heart of Leinſter, and divert the forces and attention of O Rourke, while we, with our ſmall but compact array, aſſault the neighbouring town of Wexford, and puſh the ſiege with unremitted vigour. If that poſt be obtained, we ſhall have ſecured a ſtronghold to overawe the natives, a retreat to protect ourſelves, and, by reaſon of its ſituation, a convenient channel for receiving freſh ſupplies by ſea

from the coaſts of England. Or what if the Mac Murragh, at the head of his adherents, were to make an irruption into the kingdom of Meath, the patrimony of the uſurper, and wound him in the very vitals of his potency? Thus ſhould we light up two tremendous fires, which burning at the ſame time with fury in different regions, would diſtract, would weaken, and, ere long, deſtroy our adverſary. It will be time enough to carry deſolation to the North, when, by the terror of our arms, we ſhall have ſubjected the South.

So ſpake Sir Reginald, and, while a mixt murmur of applauſe and diſſatisfaction was heard through the aſſembly, a wiſe and warlike knight,

Sir

Sir Ralph de Mowbray (whoſe natural ungracefulneſs and defects of figure were amply compenſated by his eloquence and underſtanding) thus addreſſed us :—I riſe to expreſs my diſſent from the opinion of the venerable knight who hath juſt ſate down. It is not for the advantage of your little army to be entangled in the ſiege of Wexford. Nor, granting that it was, have you powers ſufficient to effect the undertaking. To beſiege, demands a numerous hoſt. While you are aſſaulting one gate, the enemy will ſally forth at another, will invade you in the rear, and beſiege the beſiegers. Are you to be told that their allies are potent? that aid will pour in from every province? that, unleſs

you

you have the force of giants, you will be cooped up yourſelves, and either periſh by the weapons of confederated foes, or, (what is worſe) by famine? The prince of Offory is at your heels: the prince of Deſmond is at your heels: the prince of Thomond is at your heels: all Munſter will be in arms: can you reſiſt them? I maintain that you cannot. I know what is ſtrength; I know what is valour: you abound in both. But your ſtrength may be ſtarved into weakneſs, your valour may be diſpirited by fruſtration and chagrin. What meaſures then are to be adopted? Inſtead of diſmiſſing the king of Leinſter to wander in the woods, with the wretched hope of gleaning up a few

outlawed

outlawed partizans, ſtrike inſtantly your tents, and march with him to Dublin. Dublin is your quarry: ſeize the vulture in his neſt: ſmite the proud 'O Rourke upon the throne which he hath intruded into. What? ſhall you rather linger around the lofty walls of Wexford, ill-provided with warlike engines, and ſtill worſe with warlike ſtores, till your ardour be burnt out, till your hopes languiſh, till your numbers melt away, till your ſoldiers repine, and murmur for their native country; till armies ſhall iſſue forth from every petty principality, and all Ireland draw the ſword beneath the banners of the uſurper? Away with procraſtination: the bravery of Engliſh ſpirits will not bear it. Take

no

no heed of Wexford; ſet fire to your ſhipping; think no more of freſh ſupplies; the ſword is your provider. The natives, aſtoniſhed at the boldneſs of the deed, will ſtand ſtupified in their faſtneſſes, or ſhrink from the approach of enemies whom they deem to be invincible.—This ſaid, De Mowbray reſumed his ſeat, and, having ſome apples in his helmet, ate one of them with much compoſure.

Hervey de Mount-Morres made a long ſpeech.

After him roſe Sir Theodore Fitzhenry, a knight neither diſproportioned in his perſon, nor undignified in his demeanour. He poſſeſſed a fine eye, as did alſo Sir Ralph de Mowbray, and his geſture, though not graceful, was,

was, nevertheleſs, forcible.—It is with diffidence, (ſaid he) warriors, that I riſe to offer, at this late hour, a few arguments, when I conſider the able manner in which the queſtion hath been ſpoken to, by noble knights at the other ſide of the table. The point, as I apprehend, is preciſely this: Whether ſhall we lay ſiege to Wexford or to Dublin? There ſeems, indeed, to have branched from the main ſubject of debate, a collateral queſtion, which amounts to this: Whether ſhall the Mac Murragh remain where he is, or depart, and kindle war in the dominions of his adverſary? Either, then, we are to lay ſiege to Wexford, or to Dublin. If to Wexford, the proximity of the place, the opportunity of ſupply,

by

by the means of our ſhipping, the ſecurity from ſudden attack, on one ſide at leaſt, which that ſhipping can afford us, and the utility of ſuch a ſtrong-hold as the town itſelf, for the ingreſs of new troops, and as an aſylum for the old ones, are advantages which, in my mind, would preponderate over any that we might reap by an immediate march to, and invaſion of, Dublin. But if, on the contrary, we prefer the attack of Dublin, have we not a hoſtile country to fight through inch by inch, without a knowledge of the regions through which we are to paſs, without a certainty of proviſions, without a retreat ſecured behind us, in caſe of any diſaſter? It is the almoſt invariable

policy of invaded nations to lay waſte their lands, to deſtroy the fruits of the earth, in order that the invaders may periſh for lack of ſuſtenance: Ireland is an invaded nation; the concluſion that I would draw, is undeniable. Have we ſecured any potent ally, on whoſe good offices we could depend during the march towards the capital? We have not. Is the monarch of Leinſter in a condition to aid us? We know he is not. The march is therefore inadmiſſible. But we are told that the prince of Offory is at our heels: where is he? that the princes of Deſmond and Thomond are at our heels: where are they? Let them appear, and we will turn our faces on them. Their defeat, (and defeated I

truſt they will be) will diſhearten the men of Wexford, and inſure a capitulation. Unleſs indeed the town be not previouſly ſtormed by irreſiſtible efforts of valour, and unheard-of intrepidity.—Set fire to your ſhipping, ſaith a noble knight at the other ſide of the table! Why?—Either then we ſhall prove victorious, or we ſhall not. If we ſhall, I predicate that the ſubmiſſion of the whole iſland muſt enſue. If we ſhall not, fortune may be kinder to us in ſome other quarter. We can re-embark (for we will not burn our ſhipping) and make a deſcent upon another part of Leinſter. The enemy hath no fleet; therefore is there nothing to obſtruct us by ſea. What if, with a Daniſh audacity, we

were

were to ſail up boldly through the very harbour of Dublin, and carry fire and ſword on either ſide the Liffey? Peradventure we might ſurpriſe ſome unguarded gate, and ſnatch the city itſelf from the dominion of the Uſurper. But this conditionally. Wexford is our preſent aim; the prime object of our warfare. And, O ye ſpirits of our departed fathers, beneath whoſe redoubted ſwords the Saxon empire ſunk at the memorable field of Haſtings, hear and incline to the ſupplication of your poſterity! Shield us with aid inviſible; animate us to renown; be preſent at our ſide amidſt the uproar of battle! And you, ſainted inhabitants of the ſupernal abodes, who behold us from your

refulgent ſeats, and thou, O glorious Queen of Heaven! celeſtial patroneſs of human kind, look down upon our deeds, look down from the dazzling brightneſs of thy throne, to proſper our attempts and conduct us to victory.

Here Sir Theodore concluded; and was followed by Fitzſtephens, an able knight of a fleſhy habit of body, and therefore ſomewhat unſtately in delivery. He had early imbibed the rudiments of oratory from his father, who had preſided over the pay of the Engliſh hoſts, during the late wars relative to the dukedom of Normandy. The tendency of his hue to brownneſs, and an extenſive pair of very ſable eye-brows, had diſtributed

an

an air of ſenſe over a countenance, which, without theſe little aids, was too circular to be expreſſive. Putting his right leg forward, and ſmiting the table with his right hand, Fitzſtephens, with a voluble utterance, thus attracted our attention :—Notwithſtanding the cloſe reaſoning, and the fire of declamation that we have heard from noble warriors at the other ſide of the tent, I cannot omit declaring my moſt hearty concurrence with the ſentiments of the gallant knight who ſpoke ſecond in the debate. I mean not to treſpaſs long upon the patience of the council, eſpecially as ſo much hath been already ſaid upon the ſubject. But do noble knights imagine, that Wexford, one of the keys of this kingdom, a

town built and fortified as a receptacle for the Danes, and now in the occupation of the Iriſh themſelves, is not provided with a numerous and intrepid garriſon, and with every thing that may conduce to render a ſiege tedious and ineffectual to an enemy? Let me advert for a moment to the arguments of noble knights on the other ſide of the table. The venerable warrior who opened the debate, hath ſpoke decidedly in favour of an immediate ſiege of Wexford. He hath told us that good conduct is the ſiſter of true courage. But in the name of Heaven, noble warriors, is it good conduct to waſte, in an uncertain purſuit, that time which, if rapidly employed elſewhere, would, in all probability,

probability, make us maſters of the kingdom? Cæſar owed his conqueſts leſs to valour than diſpatch: I mean not, however, to detract from the fame of his intrepidity. The venerable warrior hath likewiſe ſuggeſted, that this ſemblance of quietneſs, which reigns around the camp, may be the reſult of ſome treacherous machinations of the enemy. If ſo, in the name of God let us be gone and diſappoint them, and, by ſome prompt and daring meaſure in our march towards the capital, overawe them into a real and unavoidable repoſe. A noble knight hath ſaid, that the ſiege of Wexford is our primary object, and that, ſhould Fortune refuſe to ſmile, ſhe may yet be good-humoured

to us at another time and place. I muſt, however, beg leave to obſerve to noble warriors, that I am not very willing to place my hope in her complacency, and that a diſappointment in the outſet would caſt a damp upon the enterprize pernicious and incurable. It would diſpirit our troops and raiſe the inſolence of the enemy. Then indeed might they circumvent us in the woods; we ſhould be ſurrounded, and compelled to pile up our arms, and, if not maſſacred by the natives, hiſſed back to our own country. It hath alſo been ſaid, that the Mac Murragh muſt go to Meath, and make a ſudden attack upon the very heart of that kingdom. But why not take us along with him? Will

Will our preſence diſconcert him, or our warriors incommode the progreſs of his arms? Why not then conjunctly invade the king of Meath? One forcible ſhock is worth two feeble ones. The noble knight who ſpoke laſt, hath talked to us of our ſhipping, in caſe of a repulſe, and ſaith we ſhall not burn them, but ſail for the city of Dublin. If we do not fire them ourſelves, the natives, noble warriors, may happen to do it for us, and what then is to become of our piratical excurſion, and of the project of devaſtation upon the banks of the Liffey?—I beg pardon for treſpaſſing at this late, or rather early hour, (for it is now near ſun-riſe) upon the time of this aſſembly, and ſhall conclude

with giving my moſt cordial aſſent to the idea of proceeding directly to the capital.

Fitzſtephens was followed by his ingenious friend.——But ſee yonder tinge of red upon the eaſtern clouds. Farewell!

NIGHT

NIGHT XIV.

FItzſtephens, (continued the Earl) as I ſaid before, or was about to ſay, was followed by his ingenious companion Redmond Cantimere; a tall and ſlender knight, who perfectly coincided with the ſentiments of his noble friend. This Redmond was the inditer of many joyful ballads, and had likewiſe compoſed Moralities, as they were termed, and other pieces in dialogue, acted, in our time, in the cathedrals, and ſometimes in the monaſteries. In theſe he would make the Devil talk ſo generouſly and ſo wittily, that the younger knights and

ſquires

ſquires began to think him a fine character, and not altogether unworthy of their imitation. A certain eaſy ſhrugging of the ſhoulders, and a ſlight liſping in his utterance, were not ill-adapted either to his flippancy, or to the poliſhed ſneer and quiet ſarcaſm that ſometimes mingled in his orations. In debate he would provoke noble knights to anger, and then ſneer at them for being angry: as boys worry animals till they make them mad, and then kill them for being ſo. Neverthelefs, there was nothing treacherous in the ſneer of Redmond Cantimere. It intruded itſelf not at the ſocial hour, nor ſtung the gueſt at the board of hoſpitality. He brandiſhed his forky tongue alone in the

the conflicts of public diſcuſſions, where the enemy might naturally and reaſonably expect it.

In the little which he ſaid (for, contrary to his cuſtom, he was but five minutes on his legs) he took notice, (with a mild air and placid viſage, and having his helmet under his arm) of the gallant piety with which a noble knight, then in his eye, had invoked our lady, the Virgin, and of the judicious mixture of devotion and declamation into which his ſpeech had expanded at the concluſion, where Logic, that cloſe and reſerved nymph, had condeſcended to ſoften the harſhneſs of her features, had brightened into ornament, and, like the ſetting ſun, in a fair evening after a ſcowling day,

day, ſpread a pleaſing and animated glow upon the horizon. Sir Redmond did not ſee why the ghoſts of our forefathers, who had fought at the battle of Haſtings, might not as well ſtand by us, and ſee fair play, beneath the ramparts of Dublin, as under the walls of Wexford; and he made no doubt that, (conſidering the fine compliment the noble knight had paid them) they would be equally happy to ſerve us in any other part of the iſland.

After him roſe William Fitz-Aldhelm, a young man of a ſtiff neck and great probity, the extreme erectneſs of whoſe poſition was not a little increaſed by the lofty ſtation he had held, which was that of ſuperintendant

of

of the exchequer to king Henry. The fairneſs of his ſkin, and his treſſes of flaxen hue, (to which his eyebrows bore ſome affinity) together with eyes of a lightiſh grey, were ill-adapted to diſcloſe the native treaſures of his underſtanding. However, as my friend the Lord Abbot uſed to ſay, "the beard doth not make the philoſopher." William Fitz-Aldhelm only roſe (but with an air partaking of imperiouſneſs and diſdain, for William was but lately out of place) to intimate to the council that we might now put the queſtion, it having been, in his opinion, argued ſufficiently. At other times, William could make excellent orations, in a clear, correct, elevated, and embelliſhed ſtyle, and

with

with a prodigality of language, a good portion of which might with ſafety have been ſpared.—Nevertheleſs, I deemed it befitting my ſituation to ſay a few words ere the queſtion ſhould be put. My opinion was, from the beginning, decidedly for the ſiege of Wexford. I had previouſly conſulted Claribert, whoſe anſwer was, My ſon, let Wexford be ſecured.

I roſe, and expreſſed myſelf as follows * :—I would not, gallant warriors, at this ſtage of the diſcuſſion, addreſs the council, did I not eſteem it indiſpenſable to my duty, as ſu-

* Though the Earl did not tell me *in what manner* he roſe, I had reaſon to think, from the *proceritas corporis*, and the demeanour denoted by his ghoſt, that he muſt have riſen with much majeſty.

preme commander, to make known my opinion upon a queſtion of ſuch importance. I behold it in another point of view. If the ſiege of Wexford be a delay, it is a ſalutary delay. The 'O Rourke will thus have time (and wonder not, I beſeech you, at the ſentiment) to aſſemble his own force, to aggregate his auxiliaries, will be induced to forſake his ſtrong-holds, and dare to meet us in the field. This hath been the object of my devouteſt wiſhes. Let the undiſciplined barbarians be enticed from their moraſſes, from their foreſts and their hills, where alone they can be formidable; let them derive a deceitful confidence from their ungovernable multitudes, and be allured to riſk the

fortune

fortune of the entire kingdom on the event of a ſingle battle. It is when the 'O Neale ſhall have iſſued out of Ulſter, when the ſovereign of Connaught ſhall have paſſed the Shannon, when the 'O Brien of Limerick, the 'O Carrol of Uriel, the Mac Laughlin of Ophaly, ſhall have effected a junction with the hoſt of the uſurper, that I would meet him in arms, and, (I reſt my hope on Heaven and on our ſwords) cruſh him and them by one indiſputable victory. Talk not to me of the inſufficiency of our numbers. In the open plain, every knight amongſt us is himſelf an army. Our bow-men there have room to exerciſe their art, and evince, by bloody ſignals, their deciſive ſuperiority. In the plain, the impetuous

impetuous onſet of our iron chivalry will overthrow and trample the Kerns and Gallowglaſſes, who, ill-armed, and worſe conducted, will ſink, by thouſands, beneath the thunder of our falchions. What! ſhall we forthwith abandon Wexford, and march to explore the native Iriſh in their faſtneſſes? Shall we wander from wood to wood, from bog to bog, where our heavy-armed troops and barbed courſers muſt either be ſwallowed up, or embarraſſed and butchered by the excurſive adverſary? Shall we ſcatter our little hoſt over the face of an unknown country, to be haraſſed, enſnared, and cut off in broken ſquadrons? Shall we not rather wait till a nobler prey preſent itſelf, till a royal

prize be the recompence of valour, and invite us to the conflict when our vigour is undivided?—Yes; let us ply the ſiege of this important town. Meanwhile the kings of Ireland will have time to muſter, and quarrel about precedency. It will take up ſome time, and ſow the ſeeds of ſome diſcord, to regulate their antiquity, and adjuſt their reſpective pedigrees. To this add the advantage we may expect to reap from the reſtleſſneſs of their genius, and their contempt of ſubordination. Even, were it worth while, we might make experiments upon their paſſions: we might try if avarice or ambition be reſiſtible amongſt them; if their ſouls be patriotic, and their probity impregnable. But we will

will not deſcend to thoſe arts. We came, not to triumph by corruption, but by the ſword. Ere long (I foreſee it) ſhall the Engliſh lion tear the harp of Hibernia, and her proſtrate potentates pay homage to king Henry.

Having thus ſaid, and the queſtion being put and carried for the ſiege, I recommended it for conſideration, whether, at that duſky hour, it were not adviſable that a few warriors ſhould ſilently explore the ſituation of the neighbouring town, in order that, ſhould fortune, or the careleſsneſs of the enemy, preſent ſome fair occaſion of ſeizing a neglected poſt, they might ſecure it, and give a ſignal for the approach of the whole

army: that a ſudden blow of that kind would avert the tediouſneſs and difficulties of a ſiege, and that the delay which I had mentioned as ſo uſeful to our deſigns, might better be created at our own diſcretion, than become the reſult of neceſſity. The propoſal was received with unanimous approbation, and Redmond Fitzhugh, John de Courcy, and Maurice Fitzgerald undertook to examine the condition of the enemy.

The ſun had juſt ſent a few rays above the horizon, as an earneſt of his approach, when theſe three heroes departed, and, by the inſtruction of the Mac Murragh, took the neareſt as well as moſt ſecret path to Wexford,

ford, which lay at the diſtance of two miles from our ſtation. That our having landed was known, there was ſome reaſon to doubt. Night, our ſilence and good order, with a wood lying cloſe to the ſhore, and near which we had diſembarked, ſeemed to favour the opinion that we had eſcaped obſervation.

Meanwhile a body of five hundred foot, under the conduct of the king of Leinſter, followed, at a ſmall interval, the three adventurers, who reached the town before any of the inhabitants were aware of their arrival. You will think it rather extraordinary, that at the time of ſun-riſe, no one perſon ſhould be waking. The cauſe was this; the preceding day had

been kept holy, in honour of ſome local ſaint, to the devouteſt exceſs of feaſting and jollity. All orders, both ſexes, even the children, were intoxicated. You would have thought, that the very dogs had partaken of this carouſal, ſo deep was the repoſe which reigned in the town of Wexford. From habit, however, which operates even in the hours of inebriety, they had ſhut the gates, the ſole part of their ancient fortifications which exiſted in any tolerable degree of repair. Thoſe walls, which the Danes had erected with care and coſt, were now in the moſt neglected and ruinous ſituation. In ſome places the battlements had dropt into the ditch, now dry and in ſubjection to weeds and

brambles, where they lay unnoticed and forgotten. In others, huge pieces of the wall had given way, the ſtones having been picked out to conſtruct adjacent cabins, the poſſeſſors of which were too ſlothful to ſupply themſelves from a quarry. The platforms, where the Danes had ſtrode in warlike ſhew, or ſate and diſcourſed upon the deeds of heroic times, had been long appropriated to the eaſement of nature, and were now indeed become a new ſpecies of barrier againſt aſſailants whoſe naſal organs were not accuſtomed to ſuch obſtacles. Againſt bulwarks ſo circumſtanced did the three knights prevail. Purſuing the method by which I ſcaled Dinas Bran, they aſcended by a reverend breach of conſider-

able antiquity, and ſlid down into a narrow and obſcure part of the town, with a becoming circumſpection. There, courteous ſtranger, a new ſcene was preſented to them. The ground was beſtrewn with fragments of proviſions, embers of peat, oyſter-ſhells, fiſh-bones, wooden platters, and cylindrical veſſels of the like materials, and termed, by the natives, *noggins*. Theſe laſt univerſally ſavoured of a certain liquor, of an inflammatory quality, which bore the appellation of *whiſkey*, and which I, when afterwards ſettled in the land, perceived to be not unpalatable. Here lay warriors with clotted locks, whoſe heads had been broken in the feſtivity of the day preceding, cudgels and bagpipes,

bagpipes, women, black beneath the eyes, having ſcratched cheeks and ſcarified boſoms; there cadows, and brogues, and ſwords, and ſuggins, and children, male and female, diſdainful of all covering.

The knights now proceeded to the neareſt gate, which they unbarred without oppoſition, and, having hoiſted the concerted ſignal, which was a white flag upon a lance, they were quickly joined by the Mac Murragh and his martial infantry. When intelligence was brought to me that the place was wholly ours, I marched in with the remainder of my forces. Conſternation hurried through the ſtreets, attended by Wonder and Dejection. The wretched people were thunder-

thunder-ſtruck. They had cloſed their eyes in freedom, and awoke in captivity. At firſt we had ſome idea of putting them to the ſword. But our hearts being averſe from ſuch unneceſſary cruelty, we contented ourſelves with this eaſy conqueſt over foes, who, at leaſt in their preſent ſtate, were more ridiculous than terrible.

Such was the ancient condition of Wexford, now an ingenious and polite town. And here, courteous ſtranger, I will a little deſcant upon the genius and manners of a people, part of which I had the fortune to ſubdue, the glory to govern. I will not deſcribe their perſons. You cannot be unacquainted with their air, and port, and other external advantages; as you

muſt

muſt have beheld many of them on this ſide the Channel, either intent on ſoliciting, at the court of King Charles, for the wealth and honours of their nation, or on learning the laws of this realm, or on connubial engagements with tender heireſſes and affluent relicts, or on the pleaſures of an improved and luxurious kingdom. The men of Ireland, then, are brave, hoſpitable, generous: in activity of body, in hilarity of mind, unrivalled by any of the northern Europeans. The very loweſt of the people poſſeſs a native courteſy, unknown to thoſe of the ſame, or even a better degree, in England. When enlightened by ſcience, and refined by the labours of the Poet and Philoſopher, (bleſſings

that

that are ſtealing faſt upon them) they diſplay an intellectual ability, which few nations can equal, and none excel. The idea that Ierne is a ſecond Beotia, I know to be as ill-founded, as it is malignant. It is a notion broached by mercenary wits, in compliment to the pride and the prejudices of this country; men who ſeek to thrive by ſoothing the inſolence of the vulgar; for it is the vulgar alone, whether rich or poor, who cheriſh ſuch conceptions, till at length this narrowneſs of mind becomes hereditary, and falſehoods are tranſmitted from generation to generation. Peradventure the time may come, when the ſenate of Britain ſhall owe its brighteſt ornaments, her theatre its wittieſt

pieces,

pieces, her armies their wiſeſt generals, to the nation ſhe now deſpiſes. But, alas! courteous ſtranger, as the human condition is defective in every clime, ſo the natives of Hibernia have their ſhare of imperfection. In their bravery there is a lawleſs and contentious ſpirit; their activity is frequently exerted in rapine, their valour in revenging the petty quarrels of their chieftains, or perſonal offences from unimportant cauſes. Though hoſpitable, they are addicted to exceſs, and exact the like intemperance from the gueſt and the companion. In friendſhip prompt, fervid, variable, tranſitory. Where they hate, violent are their deſigns, artful the execution of them: while their benevolence

ſeems

ſeems rather the reſult of animal good-nature, than of thought, or a conviction of any merit in the object of it. It will perhaps be a century, ere their averſion from labour, and their love of dirt, will ſubmit to the encroachments of induſtry and neatneſs (I ſpeak of the unilluminated maſs of the nation.) It will perhaps be a century, ere the unreſpectable pride of being deſcended from ſome ancient and almoſt forgotten ruffian, will riſe into a more ſublime and more uſeful ſenſe of dignity. It will perhaps be ſome ages ere pilfering will depart from the lower claſs of people, profuſion from the ſuperior orders; ere the latter will learn œconomy and independence of court-favour, the former

former the honeſt pride of well-acquired property. It will perhaps—But hark! I hear the early cock from yonder village. Farewell!

It was not amiſs that his Lordſhip did hear the cock: elſe he, probably, would have continued *perhapſing* againſt Ireland, with that peeviſhneſs to which, as he owned on a former occaſion, the ſhadowy beings of the nether regions were conſiderably addicted. However, I was not, in any ſort, diſpleaſed (though maternally deſcended from a king of Tipperary, who flouriſhed about the year five hundred) with this little digreſſion of Strongbow *de moribus Hibernorum*.

NIGHT

NIGHT XV.

THE Earl, at our next meeting, thus reſumed his diſcourſe:—I ſhall paſs over the occurrences that followed the ſubmiſſion of Wexford, and proceed to the grand event which reſtored to the Mac Murragh the ſcepter of his progenitors. An event, which, at the ſame time, ſhook violently the thrones of the other princes of Hibernia, and fixed deeply the foundations of our dominion in that iſland.

After a march of ſome peril, but of little loſs, and during which we had been engaged in ſkirmiſhes with the natives,

natives, we halted not many miles from the capital. Dublin, like moſt other cities on the Iriſh coaſt, had been built (at leaſt re-edified and ſtrengthened) by the Danes; and was now garriſoned by ſoldiers of the king of Meath, who with a mighty hoſt had encamped upon the plains of Kildare. He had been joined by the ſovereigns of Ulſter and Connaught, of Uriel, Limerick, Corke, and Ophaly; by the princes of Offory and Thomond; by the Birnes of the Wicklow hills; by the warlike tribes of the Tooles and the Dogherties; by the Shanagans and Flanagans, the 'O Shaughnaſy and 'O Flagherty, with all their forces; by the valiant men of Kerry, conducted by the Mac

Kildecuddy; by thoſe who roved the fertile plains of Caſhel and Kilkenny; by thoſe who drank of the ſilver Barrow, and majeſtic Shannon, of the Ban and the Boyne for ſalmon famed of old. In fine, courteous ſtranger, it would demand the powers of a Turpin or a Geoffrey*, to deſcribe the various clans which ruſhed, at the ſummons of the great 'O Rourke, from the remoteſt corners of the kingdom. Threeſcore thouſand men in arms oppoſed us on the plains of Kildare; while our forces, with ſome late addition from Lewellyn and the other Cambrian princes, ſcarce a-

* Archbiſhop Turpin, the ſuppoſed author of the romance of Charlemagne and the Paladins: Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote that of King Arthur.

mounted

mounted to one thouſand ſix hundred warriors, ſeven hundred of whom were bow-men, the remainder cavalry.

It was evening, courteous ſtranger, when we arrived within ſight of this extenſive hoſt, and halted at a little ſtream about the diſtance of a mile from the ſtation of the enemy. Here did we pitch our tents. And now the inferior ſoldiery betrayed, by their ſilence and their penſive looks, their uneaſineſs at the diſparity of our numbers. My knights, indeed, preſerved their accuſtomed alacrity. The abſence of the Mac Murragh, who, according to agreement, was to have joined us here, not a little contributed to encreaſe this chagrin. I was not, however, wanting in my duty, as a

General, to rouſe their drooping ſpirit, and re-animate them by example. I had indulged myſelf in reading, at intervals, the Commentaries of Cæſar, and now felt my heart both elevated and fortified by the hiſtory of the exploits and conqueſts of that commander. That preſence of mind which never deſerted him, the inexhauſtible reſources of his underſtanding, and a certain grandeur of ſoul that ſeemed to mingle with all his actions, at once aſtoniſhed, delighted, and relieved me. I now called to mind the conſternation which had ſtruck the legions, when the Helvetii, a whole people, to the number nearly of three hundred thouſand, abandoning their ancient ſeats, were preſſing with

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all their weight upon the neighbouring Roman province. Then did the ſoul of Cæſar ſhine out in all its luſtre. I remembered me, likewiſe, of Marius and the Cimbri. Claribert, who had been reading Quintus Curtius, reminded me of the power of the Macedonian diſcipline over the tumultuary millions of Darius and the king of India. At the ſame time there was in his face a ſerenity and compoſure which appeared prophetic, and which completed my firmneſs on this arduous occaſion.

I paſſed from tent to tent, informing the ſoldiery that the Mac Murragh was at hand, and would join us with his adherents ere the morrow's dawn. Of this I had really ſtrong hope.

The ſemblance, however, of certainty which I aſſumed, produced a good effect throughout the army. The men now exerted themſelves in ſcowering their coats of mail and their weapons, in tending their ſteeds, and in preparing a ſtrengthening repaſt. Inſtead of a ſingle trumpet to ſound the watches at my tent, I ordered all the trumpets to ſound at the ſame moment. The effect was grand and ſolemn, and being diſtinctly heard by the enemy, ſeemed to indicate confidence, and evinced that we were neither frighted at the paucity of our own troops, nor humbled into ſilence by the proximity of ſuch a multitude.

The principal warriors were aſſembled in my tent, where they partook

took of the repaſt; which ended, the white-haired minſtrel ſeized his harp, and tuned it to lofty numbers, which cauſe the hearts of heroes to beat high for glory. He ſung the achievements of Count Roland and Rinaldo de Montauban, at the ſiege of Albracca for Angelica the fair. This ſublime rehearſal of unparalleled exploits inſpirited my knights to an enthuſiaſm of valour, and they panted for the light of day, that they might ſignalize it on the enemy. It now wanted, as we judged by the ſtars, near two hours of midnight. We were diſcourſing, full of hope and ardour, when Hubert de Burgh required our attention with reſpect to a meaſure which he had had in contemplation.

De Burgh was bleſt with eloquence of a ſingular ſuavity, which, aided by the advantages of a graceful deportment and a ſilver tone, was ever liſtened to with delight when he ſpoke in any aſſembly. He acquainted us that a learned monk, well known to him in England, had told him, when a boy, of a volume written by one Virgil, in ancient Roman times, in which there was an account of two young warriors, who ſtole, during night, into the quarters of the foe, where they made a moſt hideous carnage: that De Courcy and he would, with permiſſion of the General, explore, at midnight, the Iriſh camp, and, paſſing in diſguiſe amongſt them, dye their falchions (ſhould a favourable

able opportunity offer) deep in the blood of an heedleſs and beſotted enemy.

The propoſal was much applauded, both by me and by the aſſembly. The two heroes retired to take a ſlight repoſe, while Claribert and I, with my kinſman Raymond, and Sir Nigel de Sackville, iſſued forth, and aſcending a ſmall hillock adjoining to our camp, diſcerned the forces of the king of Meath, by the blaze of numerous fires. From one point we could diſtinguiſh the ſhouts of vain-glorious jollity; from another, confuſed and intermitted murmurs, which ſeemed to denote that Diſcord, as well as Intemperance, preſided in their meetings. Sir Nigel even affirmed that

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he ſmelt *Whiſkey*, as, ever and anon, the nocturnal breeze invaded his ſagacious noſtrils. My ſon, ſaid Claribert, this augurs well. To-morrow's ſun will preſent to your ſwords a foe but half-ſober. That infatuating juice, which enfeebles the mind, nor invigorates the body, will amply compenſate for the diſparity of your numbers.

And here, courteous ſtranger, be it remembered to the honour of the natives of Ireland, and let it enter into the ſcale as a balance to their infirmities, that of all that numerous hoſt, not a man deſerted to our quarters, or proved, in any wiſe, unfaithful to the cauſe he had enliſted in. Nor, during ſubſequent hoſtilities, did any

act,

act, or proffer of treachery, diſgrace theſe barbarians. No tribe was betrayed, no chieftain ſold, no meaſure traitorouſly diſcovered. Our knowledge of their motions reſulted ſolely from our own ſearch, not from their infidelity.

At length the hour arrived when Hubert de Burgh and John de Courcy were to depart for the purpoſes of ſlaughter and obſervation. They had concealed their coats of mail under Hibernian garments, and, having learnt, while at Wexford, a few phraſes of ſalutation, with ſome alſo in uſe at the feaſt and the carouſal, and imitating the accent with tolerable ſucceſs, they appeared not ill-qualified for the taſk they had undertaken.

They

They had even ſwallowed a minute portion of the liquor already-mentioned, that, their breath favouring of it, they might the better avoid ſuſpicion. They croſſed the ſtream which ran beſide our quarters, and proceeded over the plain to where Dermot Mac Carty, king of Corke, was encamped with a ſtrong diviſion of the Munſter forces. Here, ſome were ſeated by immenſe fires, and encompaſſed with kettles of fleſh, and pails of beverage, to which the two adventurers were moſt cheerfully invited; being taken for idle ſtragglers from ſome neighbouring clan, whom curioſity or the love of good fellowſhip had led thither. From hence they wandered through various parties, who were occupied, ſome in

cooking

cooking victuals, ſome in eating, ſome in drinking, ſome in ſinging, ſome in playing on the bagpipes and the harp. Many lay inebriated round the fires, which finged and burned them with impunity. Not a few were ſunk in profound ſleep, amongſt whom was the Mac Carty himſelf, whoſe royal head was forthwith cut off. Nor did the deed paſs unnoticed. For a piper beheld it from a ſecret corner, whither he had retired to make ſome trials of his inſtrument, and was preparing to alarm his countrymen, when the falchion of De Courcy ſmote him full upon the neck. Headleſs he fell; nor had the tuneful tube forſaken his hands, nor the bag his arm: compreſſed by the fallen trunk, they emitted a mournful ſound.

This

This was all the havock they committed in that quarter. For the generous youths, though on an errand of blood, and though mercy at ſuch a time was an unſeaſonable virtue, were yet ſtruck with compaſſion for inconſiderate wretches, amongſt whom they had been received with unſuſpecting hoſpitality. Striding therefore over heaps of ſomnolent and drunken warriors, they bend their courſe to where O Carrol, king of Uriel, was ſituated. Here all was ſlumber. The ground bore witneſs to the late carouſal. Treading cautiouſly through piles of mingled food and utenſils, the heroes at length hewed a paſſage with their reeking blades through theſe devoted armies. Horrid was the carnage they committed. De

Burgh

Burgh thruſt his leg into a veſſel full of liquor, which, guſhing upon the face of a dormant chieftain, awoke him inſtantly. To arms! cried the Hibernian, (who probably had been dreaming of his enemies) to arms! It was now too dangerous to think of further havock. The youths therefore retreated unperceived amongſt ſome cattle, and thence, with ſilent ſteps, and circumſpectful eyes, gained the verge of the camp and returned to their companions.

We now learnt that, upon the whole, it might be collected, from the face of things in the camp of the king of Meath, that to fight us on the enſuing day had been reſolved on by the confederates, and that the geſtures

of the ſoldiery, and ſome expreſſions, underſtood by the two knights, corroborated this opinion. Such was the negligence which reigned in the Iriſh camp, that, had our army been more numerous, we might ſafely have ventured to attack them at that moment. But, notwithſtanding the advantages to be derived from the trepidation which is uſually the conſequence of a nocturnal aſſault, when the numbers of the aſſailants are magnified by the terror of the aſſailed, any diſtraction of our own forces might have proved fatal to us in the end. Much was to depend on our compactneſs and diſcipline, which could ill have been attended to in a time of ſuch confuſion. The ſhafts too of

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the bow-men would have been ſhot in vain, where there was not ſufficient light (for the fires waxed faint) to direct them with efficacy. For theſe reaſons we remained within our lines, till the riſen ſun had illuminated the face of heaven.

Ere long the Hibernian hoſt was in the field. I paſſed the brook, and took poſſeſſion of a convenient ſpot which lay between our camp and the ſtation of the enemy. Here did I form my battle-array. Our left was defended by a deep marſh which extended for ſome miles. To our right was an eminence, on which I poſted a ſtrong body of my bow-men, who from thence could employ their arrows with irreſiſtible dexterity. The king of

Leinſter, who had joined us in the night, was diſpoſed with his powers behind this eminence, which, together with a little thicket, concealed him from our adverſaries. It was my deſign that this body ſhould remain in reſerve, and, when occaſion called, either aſcend the eminence from behind, and ruſh like a torrent upon the army of O Rourke, or iſſue round by the baſe, and thunder on the flank or the rear of the enemy. Such of my infantry as were armed with pikes and partiſans, and ſhort ſwords fit for cloſe attack, compoſed the front of my main body; my knights formed the ſecond line; our forces were too few to furniſh out a third. The wings conſiſted of the remainder of my bow-

men, backed by ſome cavalry; theſe ſpread themſelves out in ſuch a manner, that the whole army exhibited the appearance of a creſcent. The command of the right wing I intruſted to Fitzgerald, the left to Fitzſtephens: the center was my care.

With reſpect to the Iriſh hoſt, the monarch of Meath, at the head of his hardy powers, exulted in the midſt, together with the princes of Offory and Thomond. The king of Connaught, great 'O Connor, commanded in the right wing, (if wing it could be called) under him were the 'O Carrol of Uriel, and the Mac Laughlin of Ophaly. 'O Neale, monarch of Ulſter, occupied with his forces the left of the army, with the 'O Shaughnaſy and 'O

Flaherty, at the head of their intrepid tribes. Donald 'O Brien, king of Limerick, and his warlike train, together with a mixed multitude of various clans, brought up the rear. Such was the ſituation of the reſpective Iriſh powers: military order they had none. A violent diſpute had ariſen in the camp, whether the 'O Neale or the 'O Connor ſhould be dignified with the conduct of the right wing; and, had it not been known that the Engliſh forces were at hand, the conteſt would have proceeded to bloody extremities. The animoſity between their followers even appeared on the day of battle, and prevented that cordial union of ſtrength, which is requiſite to give weight to the exertions of an army.

Meanwhile

Meanwhile I encouraged my infantry. I had thrown over my armour a crimſon ſurcoat powdered with ſilver lions, as a badge by which my ſoldiers might diſtinguiſh me in the action. I had recollected that Cæſar wore a military mantle of a ſhining purple, which, being conſpicuous from far, told the legions that all was ſafe; for *Cæſar* was in the field. Be not diſmayed, ſaid I, at this unwieldy multitude: they have valour only, you diſcipline and valour. "It is enough," cried the gallant crew, "it is enough that "we have STRONGBOW." I ſhall be amongſt ye in the tide of battle; by this, (ſaid I, pointing to my ſurcoat) ſhall you diſtinguiſh me. "We ſhall "find you," replied they, "by the

" havock that ſurrounds you." To my knights, exhortation was unneceſſary. All that I ſaid, as I rode along their lines, was, " Remember the field " of Haſtings." The banner of the lady Geralda danced joyful on the wind, as if portending victory. To Heaven and her I offered up a ſilent prayer, then gave the ſignal for the trumpets to ſound, and for the army to advance. The Iriſh bore down impetuouſly. The ſhock was terrible. My firſt line was thrown into diſorder. The ponderous ſpears and maces of the enemy menaced deſtruction to my infantry. The bow-men, however, from the wings, and from the eminence, ſoon checked their fury, and gave my pike-men an opportunity of

uſing

uſing their ſhort ſwords, which did prodigious execution. The torrent, nevertheleſs, urged forward: freſh ſquadrons poured on us, like the billows of angry Ocean. A ſecond time was the foe repulſed by the inceſſant efforts of the archery. At length, perceiving that my pike-men gave ground, I charged at the head of my chivalry. Fitzgerald in the right wing was already engaged with the left of the enemy. The king of Connaught with his powers had burſt upon our left, which, headed by Fitzſtephens, ſuſtained their onſet with uncommon vigour; the bow-men, by my order, opening their ranks, for the cavalry to get forward and act in concert with

them. The conflict is now general. The knights, with their barbed courſers, trample down the Hibernians, whoſe ſteeds, far inferior to ours, were unable to withſtand the weight that preſſed upon them. Buther bore me over hills of ſlain: nothing could ſtay his courſe: men and ſteeds ſunk before him. Waſt thou not red with ſlaughter, O Gridalbin! Who firſt oppoſed my fury? O Brien, prince of Thomond. This vigorous Hibernian, armed with a maſſy pole-axe, aims violently at my morion. I elude the blow, and, riſing on my ſtirrups, diſcharge my falchion full upon his neck: but the gorget, faithful to its truſt, ſubmitted not to Gridalbin. The ſtrokes on either ſide now fell with redoubled

redoubled force. Horror ſeized the ſurrounding multitude, who, preſſing back, left us ſpace for the contention. And now, determined on a quick deciſion, I dealt my adverſary ſuch a blow upon his helmet, that he bent to the ſaddle-bow. At this moment came up my kinſman Raymond, with tidings that our left was ſore preſſed by the men of Connaught, that old Fitzalan was in danger, and that Sir Andrew had been ſlain by the king of Ophaly. Enraged, I quitted the brave 'O Brien, and flew like a thunderbolt through the ſquadrons that encompaſſed me. Over the living and the dead did Buther bear me: the field was covered with our foes, who, unable to give way, ſunk down beneath

beneath the hoofs of this reſiſtleſs courſer.

I found Sir Reginald overpowered by the enemy. His ſteed had ſtumbled, and, as the knight lay helpleſs, De Burgh and De Sackville were endeavouring to defend him from a troop of ferocious warriors who ſpread deſtruction in that quarter. My ſword was not idle: it hewed for me a paſſage to Fitzalan: it ſent 'O Shaughnaſy to the ſhades of his forefathers. The venerable knight was remounted, but, being faint and wounded, was conveyed beyond the battle.

Now, ſtranger, let me turn to the mighty deeds of other heroes. To the right, Fitzgerald and his valiant band whelmed ruin upon the hoſt of Ulſter.

De

De Courcy gave dreadful ſymptoms of that proweſs which in after days diſtinguiſhed him. A prodigy of ſtrength, he beat down to the very earth, with a ſingle blow of his battle-axe, the puiſſant prince of Offory. Next fell beneath him the 'O Donovan, a petty chief, the Mac Farlane, the Mac Donough: this laſt, a brawny warrior, was cleft through his brazen helmet to the center of his body. Where was thy falchion, O Fitzbernard? It was felling the vaſt 'O Dogherty: terrific and audacious, he had dared thee in the throng: but his pride was cruſhed; he bit the ground, blaſpheming. And now, the great 'O Neale, ſeeing his nobles diſcomfited, raged through the ranks, like the tiger of the foreſt.

Now

Now fell Sir Anſelm, now too my Grijalva, deſtined never more to view Engracia de Padilla. The inſatiate king of Ulſter next aſſailed Fitzhenry, who with the gallant troops of the Lady Geralda was ſpreading terror through the enemy. Grieved, incenſed at the ſlaughter of my friends, and at the danger of my chivalry, I abandoned the leſs illuſtrious train, amongſt whom I dealt perdition, and ſought throughout the field the outrageous king of Ulſter. I knew him by the golden diadem which encircled his morion, and by the reſplendent bracelets blazing round his arms. We diſcern each other, athwart the fighting multitude: we approximate, we meet, our falchions claſh together. Our armour

rung;

rung; fire ſparkled from our helmets; our ſteeds panted; the ſmoke of their noſtrils curled about our weapons. Rage had rouſed my vigour to a degree almoſt miraculous. Short was the ſtrife. Whirling aloft Gridalbin, "This, Ulſter, for my friends," I ſaid; the falchion deſcended with dire ſway upon his buckler, and, purſuing its courſe, lopped off the ſinewy arm to which the buckler was connected. "'Tis well, I cried: this, Ulſter, for myſelf;" with a ſecond blow, Gridalbin pierced his ſide, through the ſtrongly-twiſted mail. The king leaned back upon the crupper of his ſteed; then, tottering from the ſaddle, ſunk to earth, and cloſed his eyes in everlaſting darkneſs.

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The fate of the 'O Neale ſtruck diſmay through the Hibernian hoſt. The Kernes and Gallow-glaſſes gave way on every ſide. To complete their diſcomfiture, the king of Leinſter, to whom I had diſpatched De Burgh, iſſued forth with his adherents, and aſſailed them in the rear. My archers on the eminence, whom the Iriſh forces had attempted to diſlodge, but who, ſupported by De Ridensford and Miles de St. David, at the head of ſome brave knights, had intrepidly maintained their poſt, ſtill galled them without intermiſſion. Two chieftains of the Birnes were ſlain by arrows: of the Tooles prodigious havock had been made with the like weapons. The carnage became univerſal amongſt the

the enemy: our ſteeds were wearied with trampling them down, our ſwords and battle-axes blunted with deſtroying them. At length 'O Rourke retreated with the remnant of his broken powers, and was followed by king 'O Connor and the 'O Carrol of Uriel. The Mac Laughlin of Ophaly was doomed to fall. The death of young Fitzalan was yet to be revenged. I ſought him through the routed ſquadrons, armed as the giant was with the horns of an elk, immeaſurably great, and tipped with whetted iron, which he had brandiſhed with triumphant might amidſt his enemies. A golden wreath irradiated his helmet; the trappings of his courſer were of gold and ivory. I met him

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in the throng, and transfixed him with my lance, as he was ſpurring towards Sir Guy Percy, who, with the knights of Northumberland, had ſignalized his valour by achievements that merited immortal renown.

Here the Earl diſappeared.

NIGHT XVI.

THE field, reſumed Strongbow, on the following night, was now our own. Our firſt care, after rendering thanks to Heaven and the bleſſed ſaints for ſuch a victory, was to ſearch for the bodies of our ſlain companions. The remains of ſuch as had been of inferior note we depoſited together, and threw up over them a heap of earth, the like of which you may have ſeen upon the downs of Wiltſhire. Time adorned this grave with green: it exiſted long a memorial of the mighty. The corſe of

my lamented Grijalva, with thoſe of the other knights who had periſhed on the glorious field, was conveyed to the capital of Leinſter, (whither we now marched) and intombed with martial pomp in the cathedral of the Holy Trinity *. Monuments of goodly ſculpture, repreſenting the ſupine effigies of thoſe illuſtrious warriors, were erected by my command. But alas! no trace of them is now in being. For a part of the cathedral having fallen, ſome ages after, theſe tombs were deſtroyed, my own was defaced, (for I lie interred by my Grijalva) nor hath the piety or grandeur of ſucceeding times reſtored and beautified my injured ſepulchre. It is

* Now called Chriſt-Church.

reverenced,

reverenced, indeed, as a remnant of antiquity, and once in fifty years the dean and chapter are at the expence of painting it.

Here I took the liberty to aſk the noble viſion what had become of the celebrated Gridalbin. Unworthy, anſwered he, hath been the fortune of that weapon. After having remained for one hundred and forty years in the poſſeſſion of a branch of my deſcendants, and been conſidered as a kind of houſehold divinity, it was loſt in a bloody battle, and lay hidden for two ages in a deep bog; till at length a ſtrenuous antiquary of the ſixteenth century, who was digging for Daniſh javelins, diſcovered my once-redoubted falchion: oh! how changed!

Thin, ſhort, half-eaten by ruſt, it was depoſited in the muſeum of Dublin Univerſity, where, ever ſince, it hath lain amongſt a heap of vulgar ſwords, its value unknown, its fame forgotten. Ignorance, courteous ſtranger, will infeſt even the ſeats of learning. An itinerant ſhew-man would have made his fortune by exhibiting the genuine ſword of STRONGBOW. A phantom of our ſociety, one of my acquaintance in mortal life, having occaſion for a few nights to haunt the Univerſity, glided by mere accident into the repoſitory of rarities, and knew the Gridalbin by certain undoubted tokens. Judge, ſtranger, what my indignation was, (or rather would have been had I been mortal; for I have done

done with indignation) when he informed me, on his return, of the forlorn ſtate of that once-reſpected weapon.

But to return. Dublin ſubmitted at our approach. Fame and Terror had been there before us, to tell the tidings of our victory. The whole kingdom of Leinſter ſoon followed the example of the capital, and the Mac Murragh re-aſſumed the ſcepter of his progenitors.

It was now time to think of ſome eſtabliſhment for Otho. This faithful ſquire had conceived the deſign of ſettling in Leinſter, and of attaining, by my patronage, to opulence and conſideration. Otho was a man of a ſolemn turn of mind; he hated gaiety, was enamoured of nothing but wealth

and conſequence, and, accordingly, bent the whole force of his demure faculties to unwearied acquiſition in the paths of lucre. To this end, he was ſupple and pains-taking, and content to fawn with the moſt patient aſſiduity, when he deemed it conducive to the augmentation of his fortune. I was not fully aware of theſe ſtrokes in his diſpoſition, till after I had quitted the mortal ſtate: the veil of partiality being then removed, I beheld the earthly character of my unpleaſant ſquire in its true and proper colours.

I immediately obtained for him the government of Drogheda, and, at his deſire, dominion over an iſland, (a ſmall one, I grant) which lies near the mouth of Dublin harbour, and is called

called the " Eye of Ireland," together with a large ſalary, and the excluſive privilege of ſupplying Dublin with oyſters, of which there is thereabouts an inviting abundance. This, and a contract from the king of Leinſter for furniſhing, for five years, the capital with rabbits, in which the ſaid iſland and the parts adjacent are very fertile, proved fully congenial to the induſtrious ſoul of Otho, and conſoled him for ſuch perils as he had endured in the cauſe of chivalry. Nevertheleſs, I had reaſon to repent of theſe indulgences. For no ſooner had theſe arrangements tranſpired, than a multitude of miſchiefs were engrafted on the precedent. The rabbit contract and the oyſter monopoly, engendered

an alarming generation of *jobs*, and were, in a manner, the two firſt parents of that world of iniquitous and deſtructive ſchemes which have ſince over-run and depreſſed the neighbouring kingdom. A ſpirit of *jobbing* overſpread the land, and, like a peſtilence, invaded every order of ſociety. Applications for monopolies poured in from every quarter. One was for ſupplying the court of Dublin with whiſkey, which proved ſo ill-flavoured and ſo weak, that the ladies of the royal houſhold petitioned againſt it. Another was for the ſole management of all the ſaffron in the kingdom; by means of which job, that plant, ſo material for dying their women's garments, was cultivated ſo unſkilfully,

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and ſo many frauds were practiſed in the making it up for ſale, that Ireland ſoon loſt her reputation for ſaffron, which from that time to this ſhe hath been unable to recover. The wretched people imagined that they could never advance too ſpeedily to affluence; the intereſts of the iſland were undermined by individuals, who flagitiouſly ſacrificed to their thirſt of preſent gain, the benefit ſhe was to derive in future from her commodities. If a new tower was built, or an old one repaired, or any work erected in which the public was concerned, in a very few years it decayed and fell down, for the whole had been a job for the enrichment of an individual. The fineſt courſer in the ſtables of the Mac Murragh,

Murragh, and which he beſtrode in battle, was ſtarved in conſequence of a contract for feeding him.

Such was the ſtate of things, till the rod of power was completely committed to my hands. I reſumed all pernicious grants. I called to a rigid account all defaulters, and all peculators of the national treaſure, of what rank, connections, or conſequence ſoever. I carried equity and terror amongſt them *

A ſhort interval of peace having ſucceeded the great battle by which the king of Meath was expelled from

* His lordſhip added, with an emphatic tone, "By God's bleſſing, I made them honeſt in ſpite "of their teeth."—This I thought proper to throw into a note, it being ſomewhat leſs dignified than the reſt of his diſcourſe.

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the throne of Leinſter, I reſolved to ſet out for England, and lay my laurels at the feet of my Geralda. Attended by Otho, who was not yet inſtalled in his new dignities, and by the venerable Claribert, I embarked on board a ſmall veſſel, and bore away for the Briſtol channel, it being neceſſary that I ſhould previouſly reviſit Chepſtow. We had not been many hours at ſea, when the wind became boiſterous and contrary, which obliged us to run for a little haven on the coaſt of Wales, from whence I could paſs over land to my caſtle. One evening, as we journeyed, a ſtorm of rain overtook us, among the mountains: the face of heaven grew dark; no caſtle, no cottage, appeared in

view. Diſmal and ſolitary was the road we were purſuing. At length we diſcerned, as well as the gloom would permit us, ſmoke iſſuing from a ſpot amidſt ſome neighbouring hills. Rejoiced, we puſhed towards it, and with much difficulty arrived at a rocky cell, in which ſat a hermit with a grey beard reaching down to his girdle. There was a youth alſo, who ſeemed to pay much attention to the holy man. We aſked them for ſhelter, and were courteouſly admitted. I thought that the little hermit (he was very little) ſtirred the fire, and adjuſted the benches, with an agility unuſual at his advanced time of life. But imagine, courteous ſtranger, what my aſtoniſhment muſt have been, when this venerable

rable perſon pulled away the beard, and appeared to be no other than—Philippina de Clarivaux! I burſt into an immoderate fit of laughter; ſo alſo did ſhe; and ſo did her damſel (for ſuch the other proved to be); even Otho was moved to merriment, and, as a phænomenon, his long viſage broadened by degrees into a grin: it was the only time in my life I ever knew him to ſmile. Claribert, good old man, ſhook his ſides moſt heartily.

When we had taken ſome refreſhment, the lady of Clarivaux addreſſed me as follows:—Earl Strongbow, doubtleſs, muſt be exceedingly ſurprized at beholding me in ſuch a garb, and in ſuch a ſituation.—Here, notwith-

notwithſtanding her late hilarity, ſhe ſhed a ſhower of tears.—You muſt know, continued ſhe, that ſoon after the tournament, in which you proved victorious over Ulric the Dane, it was my fate, or rather my folly, to wed the moſt unknightly and moſt worthleſs of mortals. As I was known to be the miſtreſs of very ample poſſeſſions, ſeveral needy knights, who had ſeen me at the tournament, purſued me with addreſſes of the moſt flattering nature, and affected to approach me with the higheſt adoration. My family, more proud than prudent, would fain have had me eſpouſe the decrepid Earl of Worceſter, whoſe eſtate was on the decline, and who had made diſtant overtures; and thus

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barter for precedency, and the coronet of a counteſs, the opulence I inherited from my kinſman, the lord cardinal. But I, young and merry, was of a different way of thinking.

I muſt tell you, my lord of Pembroke, that I am fanciful. I had conceived a violent, and unaccountable partiality for a red beard, and indulged myſelf in the notion that my happineſs depended on my being wedded to ſome man who was in poſſeſſion of that article. It delighted me, I knew not why, and I was determined to be gratified by the choice of ſuch a huſband. It happened then that there dwelt, not many miles from my caſtle, a knight who was lately returned from the Holy Land:

 (I had

(I had diſcarded Hugo de St. Paul) he was bleſt with a red beard, and had the prettieſt taſte in armour that could poſſibly be imagined. It is true he had diſſipated a very noble patrimony, and returned from the wars not worth an acre. In ſhort, he was one of thoſe ſhewy beggars that are well received in every caſtle: if they have but an elegant coat of mail, and a prancing ſteed, we (at leaſt we women) are apt to look no further.

Sir Randolph, for ſo he was named, had for ſome time pranced after me to every tournament, or feſtive meeting, and at length contrived to attract my regards, not only by the redneſs of his beard, but alſo by the poliſh of his armour, which was ornamented with

with the fineſt inlaid work, that had ever been obſerved in England. I will deſcribe to you the running pattern which adorned one of his brighteſt ſuits of armour.—Here I interrupted the lady of Clarivaux, by declaring myſelf a dull ſoldier, and totally inadequate to judge of ſuch decorations.—Well, replied ſhe, to proceed with my ſtory. One day Sir Randolph caught me in the tender mood, and uttered his pretended paſſion in terms ſo full of ardour, and was beſides ſo bewitchingly reſpectful, and ſwore by ſo many ſaints that I was ten times more lovely than any of the ladies who appeared at the tournaments, that my heart ſoftened towards him, and I, in my turn, con-

ſidered him as a moſt gallant and accompliſhed perſonage. His having been in the Holy Land would alone have inclined me conſiderably in his favour. But, beſides that advantage, his eaſy and careleſs air irreſiſtibly charmed me. Moreover, he had a way of quivering his head and turning up his noſe, when he entered any caſtle, and of looking ſcornfully about him: all which, as I thought, gave him a look of much dignity, and were undoubted ſymptoms of high birth and great endowments. Earl Strongbow, why do not you turn up your noſe in that way?—I bowed ſilently to the lady of Clarivaux, who proceeded.—In fine, I conſented to receive Sir Randolph for my huſband.

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One night, at an hour appointed, my *Barbaroſſa*, as I uſed to call him, repaired to the door of the caſtle-garden, where I, who had deceived three aunts and a grave uſher, the ſuperintendants of my conduct, ſoon after flew to his arms, and muffling my face, (indeed I threw the train of my robe over my head) agreed to ride behind him on a ſtout courſer that carried us with diligence to a neighbouring monaſtery, where the monk, who uſually confeſſed him, reſided. Here alas! we were united in the bonds of wedlock. Would to Heaven that it had been otherwiſe!—At this part of her narrative ſhe wept again: in a few mi-

nutes, however, ſhe reſumed her wonted gaiety.—

On our return to my caſtle, ſaid the lady of Clarivaux, the firſt act of fondneſs diſplayed by Sir Randolph, was to turn out my aunts and my uſher, old people who had lived with me from my infancy, and, what was worſe, in a few days I perceived, to my extreme mortification, that the caitiff did not think me handſome. My caſtle ſoon became a ſcene of riot and prodigality; the reſort of paraſites and military ſharpers. Thirty thouſand marks, which the cardinal and my father had wiſely, or rather fooliſhly, amaſſed with great pains, were conſigned to the payment of a legion

of

of creditors. Little or no attention was given to *me*. All I did was to ſit and weep among my damſels in a comfortable little room at the top of a great tower. To complete my chagrin, he maintained five harlots in a ſpacious chapel at the further end of the park, which the venerable lord cardinal had built for devout purpoſes. Thus it was with my wealth and my happineſs.

Sir Randolph had deceived me with reſpect to his very perſon. The wretch had contrived to ſeem to walk ſtrong in my preſence, when alas! he was as feeble as one of theſe little kittens (kicking one of them). In fine, I found that I was

married to a ſkeleton. One day, having ſtolen into a diſtant apartment where I knew he kept his armour, I found his hauberk ſtuffed and wadded in divers places, in order, no doubt, to make him appear luſty. Be aſſured, my lord of Pembroke, it would, if fairly emptied, have fitted a warrior of twice the bulk of Sir Randolph. His greaves too were furniſhed with falſe calves. But do, Lord Strongbow, let me deſcribe to you the elegant pattern that was flouriſhed on his hauberk: ah! do. It was ſilver thiſtles, (do you mind) and flower de luces running round, as it were in a border, and ever and anon a roſe-bud, and, at the corners,

little leopards in gold and azure, delicate and coſtly, and inlaid with the prettieſt taſte imaginable.

But to return to my woes. There was a valuable portion of my domains which, according to the teſtament of my kinſman the cardinal, the perſon I ſhould eſpouſe was not to enjoy, unleſs by a formal ſurrender from myſelf. This Sir Randolph coveted moſt horribly. For on my repeated refuſal to yield up the eſtate, he confined me with rigour to my own apartment, and fed me on bread and butter-milk. At laſt, provoked by my heroic firmneſs, he threatened to put me in the dungeon. I was ſo affrighted by this menace, that I watched an opportunity, and, with one of my damſels,

ran away from the caſtle, and wandered for an entire day in a foreſt, where I had nothing to eat but blackberries. Sir Randolph, however, diſcovered our retreat, and we were led once more into captivity. And now the wretch made another effort to ſubdue me; but being baffled again, he ſwore he would ſoon puniſh my obſtinacy. Accordingly, on the enſuing day, four ruffians entered my chamber, hurried me and my damſel down ſtairs, and thruſt us into a covered cart, being ordered to convey us to a damp old caſtle that I poſſeſſed in the fens of Lincolnſhire. It was thus the caitiff endeavoured to cut ſhort my days.

Fortunately, on the way we were met by three knights, who hearing

the

the cries of us captives in the cart, (we took care to roar) required the villains in a furious tone to halt, and diſcover what afflicted perſons were in the vehicle. The ruffians refuſed; upon which the knights attacked them, ſlew one, and put the reſt to flight. We thereupon jump out, and thank our deliverers; one of whom took me up behind him, and another in the ſame way accommodated my damſel. In this ſort we journeyed a conſiderable ſpace, while I entertained the knights with ſeveral ſublime ſtories from the romance of Sir Triſtram, and other volumes of that nature, of which I have read a multitude. My conductor was ſo charmed with the adventures I related, that he vowed

vowed to the Holy Virgin he would carry me whitherſoever I pleaſed, and trot me all over the kingdom, if I deſired it. His companions were equally gallant. I took them at their word, and ſignified my wiſh to be conveyed into Wales, where my damſel had an uncle, a hermit. For it was my plan to retire to ſome craggy ſituation, and, in the character and diſguiſe of an anchorite, elude the malicious induſtry of my perſecutor, who, I knew, would not fail to ſearch the whole iſland for me; by reaſon, my Lord of Pembroke, that, unleſs I give conſent, he cannot obtain (at leaſt while I live) poſſeſſion of the property for which he languiſhes.

The knights, who were travelling for

for pleaſure, made no objection, and in a few days conducted us ſafely to a cottage in the vicinity of this mountain. From thence my damſel and I ſet out to viſit the hermit, and obtain his advice and direction. He received us kindly, lent us a cave, procured us beards and proper attire, a little bed, a table, two benches, two kittens, a crutch, a poker, and a crucifix: theſe, with ſome porringers, are all we poſſeſs. As I had been uſed to divert myſelf by mimicking the gait and voice of my uſher, I found that I could act the hermit to perfection, and when my beard is on, and my face rubbed over with a certain powder, I make a very ſolemn appearance. I give ghoſtly comfort

comfort to many, confeſs, and impoſe penance, and receive much amuſement from what I hear and ſee.

But behold the morn, ſaid the Earl. Adieu!

NIGHT

NIGHT XVII.

ON the enſuing night, the Viſion thus continued the ſtory of Philippina:—But, Earl Strongbow, ſaid ſhe, with a look of much ſurprize, how could *you* act ſo barbarouſly to *the lady Geralda?*—This queſtion, and the ſerioufneſs with which it was put, aſtoniſhed me. Judge, ſtranger, how much my aſtoniſhment was increaſed, when the lady of Clarivaux thus proceeded:—What then, my Lord of Pembroke, do not you know that Geralda hath bid farewell to the world, and taken ſhelter from the falſhood and perfidy of men in a convent

convent on the banks of the Severn? Are you not married to the daughter of king Dermod? The whole country of late hath rung of nothing elſe. But come now, do not diſſemble, nor look ſo melancholy. Is the princeſs handſome? What is her name? Dermodina? Good Heaven! exclaimed I, what is this ſhe hath told me?——Who?—what?—Take the veil!—Celeſtial powers! what hath Strongbow committed, to merit this affliction?

The ſtorm had ceaſed: the moon ſhone clear. I roſe, and thanking the lady of Clarivaux for this information, heart-rending as it was, ſet out with Otho and Claribert for Chepſtow, having firſt given aſſurances

ances to the lady Philippina that I would exert myſelf in her behalf, and obtain for her ſuch a ſettlement as would protect her from further perſecution from Sir Randolph. I travelled with ſuch ſpeed, that I arrived the next morning by ſun-riſe at my caſtle. Doubt, anguiſh, rage, deſpair, by turns poſſeſſed my boſom. Yet, when I reflected on the levity of the lady Philippina, a ray of hope burſt upon my ſoul: it is but an idle tale, ſaid I. It was, however, my determination to repair to Geralda, and learn from her own lips, whether yet I held a place in her affections.

As I was ſitting on the battlements of the caſtle (in this very ſpot, courteous ſtranger) my ſquire haſtily approached

proached me with the bitter tidings, that the report of Geralda's having entered into a monaſtery, was confirmed by one of her late domeſtics, whom he had met in the adjoining village. Frantic, and ſtarting from my ſeat, Traitor, I cried, it is falſe as hell. In this ſudden guſt of madneſs, I ſeized my ſquire, who ſtood trembling and aghaſt, and hurled him from theſe battlements into the roaring tide beneath us. The corpſe of the unhappy Otho was ſoon after taken up by ſome fiſhermen, and interred in the church-yard of Chepſtow. It is for this, ſtranger, that I have haunted, a melancholy ghoſt, this foul, accurſed, ſpot. I cauſed a ſtone to be erected (poor atonement!) to the

memory

memory of the victim. But time, alas! hath crumbled it: no mark remains of the memorial. Stranger, if you would give repoſe to a troubled ſprite, renew the honours of the grave of Otho. I ſhall then ceaſe to roam through this neglected pile, theſe ſtately relicks, that with their venerable heads remind the paſſing traveller of Strongbow.

I mounted Buther inſtantly, and hurried to the convent. As I entered the porch, my heart throbbed violently, my knees trembled: I ſate down upon a bench, and remained for ſome minutes ſunk in ſtupid ſorrow. Rouſed at length by the appearance of the porter, I aſked him, with a weak and faltering voice, if I might

be permitted to ſee the lady Geralda. The porter replied, that he would enquire and acquaint me. In a little time he returned, and made a ſign to me to follow him. I was conducted to the grate, where one of the nuns requeſted to be informed of my name and quality. Behold then, ſaid I, the unfortunate Earl Strongbow. She hung her head, and ſighed. I related to her what I had heard with reſpect to the lady Geralda, and implored her to plead my cauſe, and procure me, if poſſible, an interview. As I ſpoke, her countenance became leſs ſorrowful: ſhe viewed me with a placid eye, and bade me take comfort. I will endeavour, ſaid ſhe, to ſerve you: wait here: I go to ſeek Geralda.

This

This ſaid, ſhe left me, ſomewhat cheared by her diſcourſe, and ere long returned, followed by the lovely, but offended fair, who with a dejected look, and plaintive accents, thus accoſted me:—Little did I expect, when retreating within theſe walls, that I ſhould ever again behold the Lord of Pembroke. Either fame hath belied your actions, or art and malice were determined to expel you from the hearts of thoſe whoſe eſteem and affection you were labouring to deſerve.

She then proceeded to relate, that, ſoon after I had landed in Ireland, a rumour had, with incredible induſtry, been ſpread by the lords of the houſe of Falconbridge, of a treaty

between me and the monarch of Leinſter, by which I was to eſpouſe the princeſs Eva, and at his deceaſe ſucceed to his dominions: that with this only view I had ſought the command of the forces deſigned to effect the reſtoration of that prince, and had likewiſe levied men and money for the ſervice: I further learnt from the lady Geralda, that the perſon whoſe cunning had moſt contributed to confirm her in the belief of this afflicting information, was a prebendary of Saliſbury, one Fitz-Robert, a conceited and prying eccleſiaſtic, whoſe gown procured him admiſſion into the caſtles of the great, where he indulged his loquacity in propagating reports, of the truth of which he was not much

much ſolicitous to be ſatisfied: but that what, more than all, had alarmed her pride, and overborne her high opinion of my ſincerity and faithfulneſs, was her having never received from me, during my abſence, any aſſurance of my unſhaken love, any proof that my heart ſtill continued hers unalterably.

At this I could not but expreſs my ſurprize: I aſked if the ſquire of Don Juan de Grijalva had not delivered to her a packet, containing the moſt tender and ardent declarations of affection and fidelity. The lady Geralda proteſted that no ſuch meſſenger had come to her caſtle, and that no accounts from me, of any kind, had

reached her. The wretch then, ſaid I, to whoſe care I committed that important pacquet, muſt either have proved falſe to the truſt I repoſed in him, or have met, while on his way, with ſome grievous miſadventure. The latter, as I chanced to learn ſoon after, had been really the caſe. The inconſiderate ſtripling, whoſe inclination to laughter you may remember to have heard me mention, had, in paſſing through a village, given a looſe to this propenſity, at the expence of a ſurly yeoman, in whoſe appearance he had noted ſome ridiculous peculiarity. The ruſtic indignantly reſented the offence: a ſtrife enſued; the peaſantry aſſembled in behalf of

their companion, and the hapleſs ſquire was doomed to periſh in the conflict.

I now beſought Geralda, with the moſt earneſt entreaties, not to plunge me in eternal miſery, by adhering inclemently to her recent reſolution. Yes, I cried, let us render abortive the vile arts of the houſe of Falconbridge, and of the pert and perfidious prebendary, the contemptible inſtrument of their ignoble deſigns. Abandon this abode of melancholy, reſume the hereditary ſplendor of your condition, nor puniſh inexorably the unoffending heart of him who hath ever deemed you the moſt adorable of women. Come, my beloved Geralda, let the rites of holy church here bind

us in perpetual union; let us baffle our deteſtable enemies, and put it beyond their art ever more to diſunite us. The good natured nun, who then entered the apartment, was not backward to promote my ſuit with the dejected Geralda; who, at length yielding to my unremitted prayers, and to the perſuaſions of the veſtal, conſented that the chaplain of the convent ſhould join our hands.

I led my Geralda to the altar, where we mutually made unfeigned vows of laſting love and truth, in ſight of the ſaints of Heaven. This done, we ſet out for my caſtle of Chepſtow. The lady prioreſs lent her palfrey to Geralda, whom I conducted along the banks of Severn to

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the well-known paſſage of Auſt. There was a boat in readineſs: we ſtepped into it, and put off from the ſhore. It was now the duſk of evening: the waves were rough, although not perilous. But alas! our rowers were unſkilful. Another boat, of ſuperior bulk to ours, approached the adverſe way. Our men, not ſufficiently alert, ran foul of this veſſel, and ſo violent was the ſhock that our boat ſunk inſtantly. Geralda diſappeared: I plunged, but miſſed her. She roſe at ſome diſtance from me: ere I could come up to her, ſhe ſunk a ſecond time. She roſe once more; I claſped her with one arm, and with the other ſtruggled through the waters. I reached the land. Geralda was no more.

more.——Oh! ſtranger, were I mortal, I could weep.—I, who with jocund heart, but a little while before, was conducting a beloved bride, in all the luſtre of her youth and beauty, to the feſtive bowers of Chepſtow, now bore her, pale and lifeleſs, to a ſordid hovel on the bank of Severn, where two poor ſhivering females took us in, and ſtrove, in kindneſs, to recall that ſpirit, which *they* thought was only on the wing, but which, alas! had taken its flight for ever.

Meanwhile I ſate in ſpeechleſs miſery. At length a peaſant entered, leading Buther, who had ſwum to ſhore, and who now hung his head, as if in pity for his maſter. The peaſant I diſpatched to Chepſtow, with

with orders for my domeſtics to attend me ſtraightway, with a bier fixed upon a carriage, and with torches, for the purpoſe of conveying the dead body to the caſtle. Oh! hapleſs Geralda, Oh! lamented maid, it was thus that Heaven had doomed thee, unoffending and angelic, to enter the manſion of thy Strongbow. Not to the nuptial feaſt, but to thy obſequies, thou cameſt; not to the bridal bed, but to the grave. Thy wonderous virtues could not ſave thee. Hadſt thou been a Falconbridge, thou mighteſt have lived to grieve thy fellow-creatures: the good are ſnatched to heaven; this world deſerves them not.

As I entered the caſtle-gates, I

was

was met by Claribert: his voice was choaked with ſorrow. I fell upon his neck: the good old man conveyed me to my chamber: he ſate in ſilence by my ſide: he knew what was grief, and that words could not charm it away. The corpſe was embalmed, and borne in ſolemn pomp to Tintern Abbey, where the holy monks received it with funeral rites, and, ſinging mournful dirges, inhumed it in their church, beſide the altar.

The Severn, that fatal ſcene of my diſaſter, and which I daily beheld from the windows of my caſtle, became odious to my ſight. To the manſion of the noble Shrewſbury I could not return: for there I firſt ſaw

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and loved the dear loſt object of my earlieſt vows. Every thing around me was irkſome to my view. It was therefore the opinion of Claribert that we ſhould without delay reviſit Ireland; eſpecially as tidings had very lately been received of new commotions in that kingdom. Meſſengers had arrived from Fitzgerald and Fitzſtephens, with accounts that the 'O Rourke was again in arms, and that unleſs this bold invader were overawed by my preſence, the diadem of Leinſter was likely to be torn once more from the brows of the illuſtrious Mac Murragh.

We departed therefore from Chepſtow, croſſed the country to a port in Wales, (for I had vowed never more

to look on Severn) and from thence, ſoon afterward reached Dublin. I had previouſly committed to the monks of Tintern, the pious office of erecting a ſumptuous monument to the memory of Geralda. Alas! it was deſtroyed at the diſſolution of the monaſtery. Stranger, if your ſteps ſhould ever wander to thoſe reverend walls, drop a tear upon the ſacred ſpot which ſtill contains the duſt of her I loved.

On our arrival in Ireland, we found the king of Leinſter occupied with preparations againſt an expected invaſion. The 'O Rourke had collected his ſcattered forces, and threatened Dublin with a ſiege. I will not fatigue your ears, courteous ſtranger, with

with a recital of the numerous triumphs with which our arms were attended. It is ſufficient to ſay, that we were univerſally victorious: ſuch was the ſuperiority of the Engliſh chivalry over the undiſciplined, though valorous legions of the enemy!

In the midſt, however, of this public proſperity, I was deprived of the faithful Claribert. The venerable minſtrel, now fourſcore years and ten, at length ſunk under the enfeebling hand of Time, and left this world of miſery for the manſions of the immortal. The fate too of my Geralda had ſhocked him irrecoverably. Bleſſed be the ſpirits of theſe two, in whatever region of the departed they

they exiſt. We ſhall meet hereafter in the kingdom of heaven. The body of the minſtrel was ſolemnly interred in the cathedral church of the Holy Trinity. A harp, at my deſire, was ſculptured on his tomb, and a Latin epitaph in verſe, expreſſive of his worth, and of his fame in minſtrelſy. He was the ſon of a potter at Rouen in Normandy, a trader ſo renowned for probity, that he at length became a proverb in that city, and Norbert of Rouen was reſpected by all conditions. As he was cut off in the vigour of life, and before he had had time to attain to opulence, he had little more to bequeath, than the glorious legacy of a good

name;

name; to Claribert as flattering, as were the buſts of his progenitors to a Roman patrician.

The genius of the minſtrel for the poetic art, had diſcovered itſelf early, and he diligently improved a talent which he devoted, throughout his life, to the encouragement of virtue, and the chaſtiſement of vice. Soon after he had arrived to manhood, he quitted Normandy, with a reſolution never more to return to that country. People of his own rank, beholding the reſpect which was paid to him by their ſuperiors, became envious of endowments which they ſaw had procured him conſideration from others, but the value of which they were incapable of conceiving, and

miſtook that ſtatelineſs of mind, which is generally the companion of genius, for a pride inconſiſtent with the condition of his forefathers. This paſſion proved a ſource of the meaneſt malice upon their part, and of diſguſt, contempt, and hatred upon his. Ignorance and envy have, in every age and clime, debaſed the human ſpecies: The "Son of the Carpenter" was reproached at Nazareth. That the minſtrel did not boaſt of his forefathers, (and what could the offspring of a potter boaſt of?) was aſcribed to a diſdain of their lowly occupation, and to a deſire of concealing it in ſilence and oblivion. But I knew, courteous ſtranger, the ſoul of Claribert: though there was little room

for

for pride in being deſcended of a potter, he was thankful that he derived his being from the exemplary Norbert.

There are perſons alſo, ſtranger, of a certain claſs, who are not high-born, but who, being barely above the line of commercial life, and having eſcaped its ſuppoſed humiliation, are by much more malicious and more inſolent to thoſe who are born but a ſlight degree beneath them, than we are, who can glory in the moſt dignified anceſtry. Among us, the man of merit experiences no artful inſults, by alluſions to his origin: ſo ſatisfied are we, ſo conſcious of our own illuſtrious condition, and indiſputable ſuperiority, that we dream

not of his birth; we think but of himſelf, and of his extraordinary qualities.

Claribert therefore betook himſelf to travel: he afterwards lived much in ſolitude. Having ſtudied human-kind, he treaſured up his reflections for the ſervice of his fellow-citizens. At times he would come forth, at the inſtance of the great and good, be preſent at the tournament and feſtal meeting, inſpire the youthful with the love of virtue, and of well-earned fame, and aid the more mature with his counſel and penetration. Diſintereſted and ſincere, he ſpoke the language of his heart, and the dictates of his underſtanding. From his temperance, his love of exerciſe, and a conſtitutional

conſtitutional hilarity, he lived to a venerable age. Till at length it pleaſed Heaven that he ſhould yield his laſt breath in the arms of Strongbow.

His diſcourſe upon the bed of death, turned chiefly upon the kingdom which he ſaw I was deſtined to rule, and upon methods for improving its aboriginal inhabitants. But, my ſon, ſaid he, corrupt them not. Govern by equity, and by a mighty arm; but do not eſtabliſh the power of kings upon the ruins of a nation's virtue. Awe the nobles: curb, but do not cruſh them*: they are the

* The great Ximenes, by acting contrary to this maxim, deſtroyed (perhaps without intending it) the Spaniſh liberty.

middle link between the people and the throne; if *they* are rendered insignificant, there is an end of liberty. Encourage the lower orders to ſhake off their ſlaviſh ſubmiſſion to the great: let it not be "a nation of "kings and beggars." He then foretold the riſe and long duration of many noble houſes, the founders of which were the companions of my victories. De Burgh and De Courcy would become, he ſaid, each the father of an illuſtrious line, and their name live through ages in their dignified poſterity. He propheſied the future grandeur of the Fitzgeralds, and ſaid, with an air of mirth, that, in centuries to come, the ſpikes and balls ſhould

vaniſh

vaniſh from their brows, and the ſtrawberry leaf adorn them in their ſtead.

But the grey dawn admoniſhes me. Farewell!

NIGHT XVIII.

WE now met for the laſt time. The ſtory of Earl Strongbow was drawing nigh to its concluſion. The Viſion thus proceeded:—After a ſeries of ſucceſsful campaigns againſt the Iriſh, the chiefs of our army became eager to obtain ſome grand and ſolid eſtabliſhment for themſelves. Though the love of fame had been the primary incentive to the many and triumphant exploits they had performed, yet was it not forgotten, that their unwearied exertions in the cauſe of the king of Leinſter, were entitled

to

to a grateful return. Large tracts of land were accordingly ceded to the principal knights, and eſtates of leſs magnitude to the inferior men at arms.

With reſpect to myſelf, an important queſtion now aroſe, the deliberation upon which created in my breaſt a cruel ſtruggle, between love for the memory of my Geralda on the one ſide, and concern for the intereſts of my country on the other. It was deemed indiſpenſably requiſite to the ſecurity of the Engliſh dominion in Hibernia, and to the compleat reduction of the iſland, that ſome chief of exalted rank ſhould accept of the propoſal, already made by the Mac Murragh, of confirming the

the ſucceſſion of the Leinſter crown, to him who ſhould eſpouſe his daughter, the princeſs Eva. It was urged by Fitzgerald, and by Robert Fitzſtephens, that my illuſtrious deſcent, my ſtation of ſupreme commander, the high feats I had achieved in the progreſs of the war, and the marked inclination of the Mac Murragh himſelf, appeared to point out me as the perſon who ſhould occupy that exalted ſituation.

I mean not to relate the many irkſome conſultations which were held upon this ſubject. Various and forcible reaſons, in the end, inclined me to liſten to the arguments of thoſe around me: my diſguſt to England from my late misfortunes, and from my

my hatred to the houſe of Falconbridge; my thirſt of glory, and (to ſpeak with the candour of a ſpirit) the ſeeds of young ambition, which now began to ſwell within my heart, and excite in it a paſſion for dominion. I yielded therefore to the ſolicitations of my knights, and became the huſband of the princeſs Eva. The archbiſhop of Dublin officiated at the altar, and the whole kingdom of Leinſter reſounded with rejoicings. The Mac Murragh ſoon reſigned the ſcepter to my hands, and, on the arrival of king Henry, which took place not long after, I did homage for my realms, and held them as a vaſſal of the Engliſh monarchy.

Fitzgerald obtained an ample property

perty in the diſtrict of Kildare. The De Burghs, ere long, had ſplendid poſſeſſions in the province of Connaught, and Hervey de Mountmorres, and his deſcendants, were ſettled in Wexford, and the country there adjoining. I was not happy with the princeſs of Leinſter. I eſteemed, but loved her not. She was fair; but oh! when contraſted with the image of Geralda, which ſtill had a place within my aching boſom——I will not dwell upon this ungrateful topic.

As to the lady of Clarivaux, I prevailed on the king of England to interfere in her behalf, and obtain for her the ſeparation ſhe had deſired, with ſuch a portion of revenue as was ſuitable to her quality. Thus was

the

the lady Philippina, from an impolitic diſpatch to procure herſelf a ſpouſe, compelled to ſpend her life without one; for Sir Randolph, though infirm, ſurvived her.

At length, courteous ſtranger, in the year of our Lord one thouſand one hundred and ſeventy-ſeven, it was the will of the Omnipotent that I ſhould depart this earthly ſcene, and quit my grandeur and my griefs together. My heart was, at my deſire, encloſed in a vaſe of marble, and depoſited at Tintern in the tomb of my Geralda. The reſt of my mortal part was conveyed in regal pomp to the cathedral, and interred near the remains of Don Juan de Grijalva. The nobles and knights, the companions

panions of my victories, and ſeveral Hibernian princes, attended the ſolemn ceremony.—Many mourned but in ſhew, (for the ſpirits of the dead are ſuffered to behold inviſibly the interment of the bodies they have juſt abandoned) many with ſincerity. The ambitious rejoiced in ſecret, for each hoped to partake of the power which I had enjoyed; the arrogant and the corrupt, for their ſcourge and terror was no more. The poor and the humble lamented from their hearts; for they had loſt a vigorous and inflexible defender.

And now, O courteous and benignant ſtranger, I beſeech you to beſtow, when you are no longer a captive, a modeſt tomb-ſtone on the ill-

ill-fated Otho. Then ſhall I deſert theſe ancient towers, and reſt in the regions of unembodied beings, till we ſhall finally be ſummoned into the preſence of our Redeemer. For there is a Heaven, and there is a Hell: let the infidel make haſte to believe it. —Adieu! adieu! for ever.

FINIS.

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